A STUDY OF THE NATURE OF FAITH AS ENCOUNTER: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CHURCH'S USE OF RADIO-TELEVISION

A Dissertation

Presented to the

Faculty of the School of Theology at Claremont

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Theology

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by

Gordon C. Ruud

June 1968

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This dissertation, written by

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under the direction of his *Faculty Committee, and approved by its members, has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of Theology at Claremont in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of*

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FOREWORD

The author is grateful for very capable and sympathetic assistance and encouragement from his guidance committee. In addition, he wishes to acknowledge the encouragement and help given in different ways by Sigurd Aske of RVOG, E. H. Robertson of WACB, J. D. Halloran of the Centre for Mass Communications Research at Leicester University, and John Bachman.

He is also especially grateful to the staff of Radio Voice of the Gospel (Radio Feon' Ny Filazantsara) at Antsirabe, Madagascar for the insights gained while working together on an exciting new communications project. He wishes to express his appreciation to Theodore Fricke and the Board of World Missions of the American Lutheran Church for helping to make his study possible.

Finally, he is very grateful to his wife for constant encouragement and assistance in proof-reading.

May, 1968 GORDON RUUD

IN MEMORIAM

GORDON C. RUUD

1920 - 1970

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IN MEMORIAM

Gordon C. Ruud, born in 1920, died unexpectedly in November 1970. Illness had kept him from making minor corrections in his dissertation immediately after his commencement. Mrs. Ruud has been most helpful in preparing this dissertation for publication.

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CHAPTER I

THE ISSUE: THE RELATIONSHIP OF MESSAGE TO MEDIA

The compelling presence of radio-television in the communication picture is forcing upon the Church an examination in depth regarding its ultimate concerns as communicator.

I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Because of new categories of the structure of communication these supra-personal networks present (where mutual identification and reference between sender and receiver is blurred), the Church is faced with new demands to give clear definition to the nature of its message. Having proceeded mainly in a pragmatic approach to the use of radio-television, the Church now stands somewhat confused and hesitant before these media. It realizes its lack of comprehension of just what the media do and is a little bewildered as to how to find its way through a synthesis of both the theological and the practical considerations, namely, faithfulness to its message and also to the structures of the media.

II. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

New dimensions of communication are demanding redefinition of the Christian's task of communication. At the same time, the claim that the new media are moulding a new type of man must be taken seriously. The implications of this thesis

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are supported by a growing number of theologians who believe that the electronic age is, in a sense, forming a new type of man that fits the needs of the day.[1] We have hardly begun to make a definitive theological examination of the issues.

The study is important because of great potential opportunity that must be understood. The nature and the limiting factors in the opportunity must be put in focus. The executive director of the World Association For Christian Broadcasting made the evaluation that "for the first time in history we have the means to obey our Lord's command . . . . In the communication of the Gospel . . . the churches have been deplorably slow in using radio or T.V."[2]

There seems to be a combination of a certain amount of headlong and oftentimes inadequately oriented use of the media and undue hesitation when confronting them. This is not surprising (especially the latter) when the Church would like to claim the media but doesn't quite know how.

Of critical importance is the present fact that, in spite of our considerable knowledge about interpersonal face-to-face communication and in spite of years of examination of the mass media, there is no clear consensus concerning their

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[1]The predominant thesis of media analyst, Marshall McLuhan. See, for instance, his Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965).

[2]E. H. Robertson, "Potentialities of Radio and Television in Modern Communication," The Christian Broadcaster, XIV; 2 (August 1967), 17-29.

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effects. There is no golden key to unlock their mysteries.

At the inception of the Lutheran World Federation's "Radio Voice of the Gospel" project in the late 1950's, some theologians were sceptical about the media's capability of communicating (electronically!) matters of faith. Listening to the analyses of our more informed media analysts confirms the presence of this tantalizing dilemma. Bachman posed the question:

> The Church's task of communication does not automatically justify the use of the mass media. Is the Christian Gospel so specialized that a mass medium is inappropriate for its transmission? Is the Christian faith so private, so intimate that a mass medium is incapable of transmitting it?[3]

The whole matter of "transmitting faith" becomes pivotal for our entire approach and is the basic concern of this study. Understanding faith as encounter and involving an element of relationship (as over against a unique emphasis on internal privatization) puts the question on a sounder basis. We seek to transmit the Gospel in such a way that there is an authentic invitation to encounter and relationship to the Lord of the Gospel and to one's neighbor.

Basic to the importance of this study is the assertion from social science that communication itself is the determinative element of any society. The very existence of

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[3]John Bachman, The Church in the World of Radio-Television (New York: Association Press, 1960), P. 109.

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society depends upon communication. It is even more important for the communicator to understand the role of the media in this process. The deepest values of the Church's message are involved.

III. PARTICULAR FOCUS OF THE STUDY

This study is not oriented towards apologetics or dogmatic specifics concerning objects of faith. It settles upon the essential nature of faith in its response to the Gospel as seen in encounter and relationship of person, first to God and consequently to others.

Neither is it an apologetic in essence for the right or the need to communicate. It assumes the Church is a communicator and seeks to meet the needs of the Church already facing the media.

It does not deal with specifics concerning programming except in a very general reference.

It is also not concerned with peripheral matters such as the ethics of radio-television in the broader sense. Neither does it deal with the type of problem such as how to convey ethical and moral values alone, important as they are but peripheral to the central concern that makes our problem unique and which gets at the heart of what the Church is.

Lastly, it is not a survey of the scope of the Church's use of radio-television. It seeks only to illuminate the question: is there a potential and proper way to

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use the media that is congruent with a concern for the essential message of the Church and for the integrity of person. In doing this it focuses on communicating with the person outside the fellowship of faith.

IV. RESOURCES

Interesting and provocative contributions from the time of the Reformation are offered by various comments of Martin Luther, especially, concerning the nature of the Gospel and the response to it. Of importance in our theological perspectives are insights of some of the dialectical theologians: Barth, in his impetus to examine encounter in new dimensions; Brunner, in his emphasis on truth as encounter; some of the perceptions of Rudolf Bultmann concerning the nature of faith; Tillich's analyses of faith in relation to culture and society. Excellent contributions to the study of faith and person are found in the writings of Ott, Teilhard de Chardin, Gogarten, Hartshorne, Hutchison, Jaspers, Day and others.

Continuing in the theological sphere the work of some of the prominent figures concerned with the New Hermeneutic gives some helpful directions in the meanings of word as related to faith and communication. In this group are Ebeling and Fuchs on the continent and men such as Funk, Wilder and Dillenberger in this country. Of prime importance are the writings of Ebeling. His particular concern has been to

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study the Reformation, particularly Martin Luther, to whom he ascribes a major affinity with the New Hermeneutic.

Many of our special interests in faith, as this study refers to it, are dealt with by some of the younger theologians. Among these are James Robinson and John Cobb, Jr. (editors of the "New Frontiers in Theology" series), Hick, Braaten, Harrisville, Sponheim and Burtness.

When considering the specific theological-philosophical perspectives we are searching for, there are yet only a few books that give some dirrction although they are not comprehensive or systematic. These include Kraemer's Communication of the Christian Faith, Read's The Communication of the Gospel, Marty's The Improper Opinion, Sellers' The Outsider and the Word of God, Boyd's Crisis in Communication, and Bachman's The Church in the World of Radio-Television.

Some of the most provocative recent papers and articles concerned with our particular problem have recently been presented by WCC officials in Geneva; notably Van den Heuvel, Schultz and Dumas.

James Robertson, executive director of the World Association for Christian Broadcasting in London, has made available excellent material in their quarterly, The Christian Broadcaster. RAVEMCCO (Radio, Visual Education and Mass Communication Committee of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA), Barnerd Luben, executive director, has

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done much of the same.

Partial studies and insights of international Christian broadcasters particularly, such as Radio Voice of The Gospel (owned and operated by the Lutheran World Federation), are helpful though largely unsystematized and fragmentary. Men such as Aske (RVOG), Dahmen, Hartman, Lamb and others have made excellent contributions. The author's five year experience as director of the Radio Production Studio of the above operation in Madagascar has given much unique resource material.

The studies of the last two decades especially of the nature and effects of the mass media done largely by men in the USA give almost all that we know concerning this matter. One refers particularly to Schramm and the many books he has either written or edited, Katz, Lazarsfeld, Klapper, Dexter, White, Berelson, Hovland, and the Westminster series on Christian Communication. J. D. Halloran and the Centre For Mass Communication Research at the University of Leicester have most recently been doing some of the most definitive work in the field of the effects of mass communication, particularly television. Prominent in Great Britain is the sponsorship of the Television Research Committee.

Of decisive importance from the field of social science and psychiatry are the studies of society and of person by men such as Tournier, Ruesch and Bateson. Buber's concerns about dialogue and relationship are basic. Dewire,

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Festinger and Nida are among those prominent in contributing to the understanding of communication.

A check made recently with the above organizations concerned with international broadcasting and also with national concerns (WACB, RAVEMCCO, RVOG) along with recent correspondence with Schramm, Bachman and Halloran indicates that in the field of research regarding real definition of the effects of Christian broadcasting we are still looking to the future. RAVEMCCO is attempting to set in motion a pilot project in Korea, but its findings will undoubtedly not be available for some time.

These are the problems and the tangible resources for our concerns about the relationship of the Church's essential message to radio-television. It is necessary to have both a clear and a valid approach towards finding a solution.

V. MODE OF PROCEDURE

This study claims that the two elements in the dilemma (faithfulness to message and to the structures of the media) find common ground in the category of person. It seeks to give proper orientation through the focus of understanding the essential human (and religious) quest as that of discovering what it means to be a person. The focus is put on faith as the determinative or fundamental religious element. Faith is essentially communication, encounter, relationship and, as such, is concerned with person. For the Christian it

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means person in relationship that is response to the Gospel as the dynamic that brings person to fulfilment. Categories of person in the structure of faith are then considered side by side with categories of person in the structures of radio-television in order to arrive at a valid prognosis concerning the Church's use of these media.

In our examination of the quest to discover what it means to be a person we are aware of the fears of many as voiced by Olov Hartman, director of the Sigtuna Foundation in Sweden:

> Is it possible to develop into an independent personality in a society like ours? Must not all attempts in that direction be suffocated by the accumulating pressures of the opinion-formers, the group, the mass media?[4]

We shall discover, however, that this stereotype view is not as valid as once believed. It will be necessary to delineate what we mean by person as over against isolated personality. A study of Martin Buber and Paul Tournier reveals the important distinction that "the individual associates, whereas the person communicates. . . . The person communicates inwardly with the second person, the 'thou' . . . ."[5]

To discover person means to discover communication.

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[4]Olov Hartman, "The Mass Media--Man's Power and Subjection," The Christian Broadcaster, XII; 4 (December 1965), 8.

[5]See Paul Tournier, The Meaning of Persons (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962), esp. pp. 129-30.

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This does not mean that God is known only as the ultimacy of personal relationship, or that statements about God just refer to the same. Neither does it imply that we all discover faith to be identical with life. On the contrary, as expressed by Ebeling, "Faith is . . . the work of God in man, . . . the simple opposite of all achievements and all merit . . . . Faith is the end of all one's boasting."[6]

But faith is meeting, and encounter, and fellowship. The true dimension of personal relationships is discovered only in relationship to God.

The theological stance determines the approach to the media, as well as to all communication. The problem must be seen essentially in the relatedness of the theological and the hermeneutical (aware of technical realities), bringing the Gospel to man where he is. New social patterns and tools bring many tensions.

Van den Heuvel sees two types of theologians as over against the media, "Communications-theologians" and "Media-theologians". The former, he claims, are usually older and are excited about communication as a concept but are critical of the media. The latter are presented as seeing the role the media are playing actually and find them a very part of

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[6]Gerhard Ebeling, The Nature of Faith (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1961), p. 111.

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their own life. The two types need each other.[7]

In any event it is necessary to investigate the integral relationship between faith and communication and also ask the question as to whether or not the element of faith injects something new into the communication process.

In these matters the insights of the New Hermeneutic are drawn upon to help understand the place of word in understanding and in dialogue. This helps in the understanding of how faith is related to reality and to the particular reality of person, which means historical reality, reality in this world. Separating faith from life and from person in reality is the opposite of faith as communication and makes the use of the media problematic and questionable.

As encounter, faith will be shown as freeing the person through the Gospel, inviting to commitment and to fulfilment, involving the total person, responsible for the wholeness of his person as opened up for him but finding it defined only in relatedness which the Gospel truly offers.

An analysis will be made as to how far this process involves attitude and opinion change and how much it is canalisation of latent needs and drives. Questions such as the following are raised: Have we been remiss in how this is

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[7]Albert Van den Heuvel, "A Meditation About Theology, Communication, and the Mass Media, "The Christian Broadcaster, IX; 2 (August 1967), 5-17.

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presented? Where is there danger in defining the radical element of response in a wrong context? How about sin and forgiveness? Grace? And, where do the media fit into this picture? How do you talk and portray? Because of the intrinsic power of the Gospel, are we subject to the ordinary rules of communication regarding attitude change?

Of supreme importance is the examination of what is known concerning the effects of the media. Though little or no valid research has been done by Christian broadcasters, work in other similar areas needs to be examined carefully. Just what effects does the Christian communicator seek in the one receiving his message? In what sense are the special ways in which the media communicate commensurate with the described effects the Church seeks in the person invited to faith? Are there effects which are not measurable in the usual sense?

Such an investigation will reveal essentially that we find the correct and promising approach when faith, through encounter with God and response to the Gospel, is not presented as a radical denial of person but as the grounding of one's total existence, the fulfilment of the deepest latent needs of person in its wholeness, and release for life in relationship and real community--freedom to live in true humanity under God, a humanity that has eternal dimensions.

The structures of the media seem to offer this possibility. An inevitable discovery along the way will be that

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the media radically raise questions that are directed straight to the very essence of the Church and its entire structure and approach.

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CHAPTER II

FAITH AS THE DETERMINATIVE ELEMENT OF CHRISTIANITY

Any profit to be gained from an analysis of the media and their effects depends, in the first instance, upon decisions arrived at concerning the very essence of the message. Message and media are welded together, and one is used, in a sense, to measure the other. The measurement can not be made without a clear understanding of the fundamental or really determinative element of Christianity. This study seeks to emphasize that faith is this fundamental element, faith as Christianity conceives of it.

In this chapter the particular characteristics of Christian faith are outlined briefly. Without such a basic theological orientation in the approach to the problems of mass media use there can only be continued hesitancy and unavoidable confusion.

To say that faith is the determinative element is to understand that all else flows from it. This chapter defines the basic element of Christian faith as encounter and response to the Gospel that is a free and trusting relationship. Because of the commitment to the faith relationship the person is fulfilled. This is how the Christian defines all of life and ultimate meaning. All is filtered through his faith relationship with God as seen in Jesus Christ. Christianity discovers the faith relationship as a totally freeing one. It is Gospel oriented and brings free

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commitment to God and to life within the framework of fellowship such as described in I Jn. 1:3--"That which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ."

The Gospel, as the basis and call to faith, brings everywhere the potential and power for renewal and for creative fellowship. This fellowship is sustained by the same grace of the Gospel that called it forth, forgiving, renewing and creating. That is why life, eternal life in the Christian sense, has a deep qualitative meaning.

Faith is the fundamental Christian relationship. When we communicate what is of ultimate concern to Christianity we are concerned about communicating what is essential for faith.

Radio-television demands clear answers concerning the "what" before fruitful answers regarding the "how" can be attempted. It is precisely the conception of the fundamental nature of the message that determines the first approach to the media, the understanding of techniques in the process, and the mode of evaluating effects.

The theologians and professional communicators must discover a way of fusing what is of primary concern to each. A recent report of international broadcasters concluded by saying, "The communicators appeared better oriented to theology than did the theologians to mass

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communication."[1]

The concerns of this chapter are not oriented towards apologetics but speak of the basic understanding of faith as encounter in its relevance to communication. It will also involve the question of faith's search for a hearing.

I. THE PHENOMENON OF FAITH

Faith involves man and God in relationship. This relationship is not static, but dynamic. Faith is a special kind of knowing in the biblical sense of the word.

The communicator must come to a decision as to how one comes to know God. The communication itself is going to become a part of this "how".

The key to understanding the various forms of faith is seen in the manner in which the relationship between God and man is conceived of.

Luther contrasted the forms of faith by what he called the "theology of glory" and the "theology of the cross". His own conception of the faith relationship was based on the latter. On April 26, 1518, he defended the following theses:

> 19. That person does not deserve to be called a theologian who looks upon the invisible things of God as though they were clearly perceptible in those things which have actually happened (Rom. 1:20).

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[1] S. Franklin Mack and Everett Parker, "Journalism and Broadcasting," The Christian Broadcaster, XII; 2 (July 1965), 15.

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> 20. He deserves to be called a theologian, however, who comprehends the visible and manifest things of God seen through suffering and the cross.[2]

Pinomaa, the Finnish Luther scholar, sums up Lether's position in this matter as one of his greatest achievements, where "all aspiration to the level of God is 'theology of glory'. . . . The theologian of the cross learns to know God by way of suffering and the cross."[3] In other words, it is not fundamentally man's search and discovery but his response to the God who calls him in the Gospel.

Luther's concept of the event of the cross is important to the communicator. To Luther, "the cross of Christ is more than a historical event, for it demonstrates the fundamental relationship between God and man."[4]

In any event, faith, in its larger dimensions, concerns something ultimate regarding the orientation of person. In the Christian faith this personal orientation is one of encounter and ultimate concern.

Encounter as Decisive for Faith

Faith *is* encounter. Just to say "I believe in God" in the sense of believing something might be true, or to

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[2]Martin Luther, *Works* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1957), XXXXI, 40.

[3]Lennart Pinomaa, *Faith Victorious* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1963), P. 3.

[4]Martin Luther, *Werke* (Weimar: Bohlau, 1883), I, 362 (1518); Luther, *Works*, XXXXI, 52; cited by Pinomaa, *ibid.*, p. 4.

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"believe" that something is going to happen, or to have "faith" that an object will not disintegrate or collapse is radically different from the faith relationship of the Christian.

Man is confronted by God. Faith, specifically, is encounter with God through the call of the Gospel that develops a dynamic in a sense of fellowship, of relationship, and of relatedness and fulfilment in all of one's being and life. It has the character of an ultimate commitment to God that at the same time is constant commitment to life in its largest meaning. The Gospel frees man for this two-fold relationship that is the real nature of faith. Faith's basis, focus and dynamic grow out of God's meeting man in the person of Jesus Christ.

Forell notes Luther's insight that man, because of his very creatureliness, as part of God's creation, is really confronted by God all of his life. In Luther's Sermon on Genesis he explains:

> But God speaks still, and without pause, since no creature exists on its own. For as long as a creature exists, so long the creative word is spoken, as long as the earth bears fruit, God speaks without ceasing. . . .[5]

Without discussing the various facets of Christian faith, the element of encounter seems to be the basic

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[5]Luther, Werke, XXIV, 37, line 24 (1527), cited by Forell, op, cit., p. 66.

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ingredient. The man of faith has seen three things: He knows that in himself he is incomplete and lost before God; in the Gospel he recognizes what God has done for him and is freed through encounter with God who addresses him; finally, he commits himself to a continuing fulfiling relationship of grace.

Religious faith is not a soliloquy or a self-projection. It is not just a projection of images, as Buber has so graphically illustrated. Faith is an entrance into reality through encounter. "It is in the encounter itself," said Buber, "that we are confronted with something compellingly anthropomorphic, something demanding reciprocity, a primary Thou."[6] Buber contrasts Hegel's system where God never enters into a living, direct relation with men, but, as the Idea, he must be drawn into the dialectical process. Buber claims that "whenever man nonetheless has to interpret encounter with Him as self-encounters, man's very structure isdestroyed. . . . Without the truth of the encounter, all images are illusion and self deception."[7]

There is broad consensus about this. Eugene Joly, a Catholic scholar, explained that "you do not become engaged

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[6]Martin Buber, The Eclipse of God (New York: Harper & Row, 1952), pp. 15-17.

[7]Ibid., pp. 22-23

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in religion as you do in some human enterprise of which you are the promoter. . . . Faith, like the whole Christian life, is an encounter in which God takes and keeps the initiative."[8]

Brunner has developed this theme in his book, Truth as Encounter, with the relationship of faith described thus: ". . . to be face-to-face with God according to his will--is the fundamental category of the Bible; . . . ."[9] To summarize, he claims that only in this way, from a point outside himself, can man know himself as a responsible person in fellowship, in antithesis to the solitary self, the sinful self.[10]

The encounter involves communication; it involves person. Tillich spoke of communicating with God with the highest that we are, namely, person. To speak of a God of person means "a Being capable of communication. The basic condition of communication is community; absolutely diverse beings could never communicate."[11]

We share in the encounter. We communicate. We do not

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[8]Eugene Joly, What is Faith (New York: Hawthorne Books, 1958), p. 48.

[9]Emil Brunner, Truth as Encounter (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1943), p. 102.

[10]Ibid., p. 39.

[11]F. Gerald Ensley, "The Personality of God," in Edgar S. Brightman (ed.), Personalism in Theology (Boston: Boston University Press, 1943), p. 113.

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just observe. The danger is to forget that life itself is the place of encounter. We do not separate our person from life.

Awareness of God and the divine presence does not compel separation from what is mundane. Consciousness of God does not thereby imply cessation of consciousness of the material or social environment, the aim of radical mysticism.[12]

The Christian understands the New Testament picture of faith's encounter as seen in Jesus, where he portrays faith as focused in concrete encounter with him as encounter with God, the Father. The dynamic of the encounter is pictured as letting God work.

Encounter, in this sense, does not eliminate its implication for fulfilled being, being in the world. Here there is a synthesis between the personal and the ontological for a correct concept of reality where, as Ebeling says, the question of reality for man "depends on his confession to Jesus: true God and true man . . . of whom we confess that in him God became Man in order that we through him may become real."[13]

This type of encounter means communication. Faith

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[12]For a discussion of this see John Hick, Faith and Knowledge (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1957), p. 111 ff..

[13]Ebeling, Word and Faith (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1963), pp. 199-200.

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must have this element of communication. Pure faith would be absolute communication. In the world, men live in tensions, in incompleteness. In the encounter of faith, also, man does say, "I believe; help my unbelief!" (Mk. 9:24).

It is significant that the American Lutheran Church speaks of faith under the heading of "Spiritual Fellowship" by saying, "Christian faith is fellowship."[14]

Faith an Ultimate Concern

Flowing out of the above considerations is the concept of faith as an ultimate concern, as the ultimate concern of person. Luther's estimate of man's orientation of his concern is cited by Watson in the statement that "that for which a man does anything, that is his god. For him Luther a man's god is that in which he sees security and happiness, and to which he devotes himself or gives his allegiance."[15] Luther sees men giving ultimate concern to anything, even to themselves; but only faith that sets its ultimate concerns of person upon the God revealed in Jesus Christ is what is called "saving" faith. It is of the greatest relevancy to

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[14]The American Lutheran Church, "United Testimony on Faith and Life," in its Handbook (Minneapolis: 1967), p. 142.

[15]Philip Watson, "How Luther Speaks About God," Dialog, VI (Autumn 1967), 277.

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person.

As over against irrelevancy, "the unconditional character of this concern implies that it refers to every moment of our life, to every space and every realm. The universe is God's sanctuary," said Tillich.[16]

To speak of faith and to invite to the response of faith is to lead to involvement in the fullest life-relationship. The discussion of communicating by radio-television in Chapter V will find its bearings by recognizing this fact.

Unique Delineation of Faith in Christianity

Faith, in a general sense, can be spoken of in a variety of settings. In Christianity faith finds a deeper meaning. The message is God's addressing man. Faith's acceptance of the message becomes a relationship to the deity that fills all of life.

Christianity considers wrong that which Samuel Miller describes as the idea that only "when reason can carry him no further and he still seeks to extend his experience he relies on faith."[17]

Acceptance of the message is not just a static

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[16]Paul Tillich, Theology of Culture (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 41.

[17]Samuel Miller, "In a Time of Unbelief," in Kyle Haselden (ed.), Are You A Nobody (Richmond: John Knox, 1967), p. 75.

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contractual matter. It is something beyond the frame of the subject-object relationship. Gogarten, who, like Bultmann, uses existential categories, goes beyond the dialectical theologians in insisting that faith "is being confronted by the Word from beyond itself and incorporated into a new relationship . . . fundamentally conditioned by the history of Jesus Christ."[18] Here again, faith is introduced as involving relationship. It is in this sense that faith is the secure grounding of one's existence.

Christian faith is not only looking at dogma and saying, "I believe these statements are correct." Faith is primarily response to the Gospel, life response. This does not mean that this response would not involve a formulation and confession of accepted truths concerning God's Speaking to men. We "confess" our Christian faith in the Apostles' Creed. What makes it living faith, however, is life response and life relationship with the God we confess.

This is why faith, in the Christian reference, takes on unique significance when we speak of communication. In Christianity God is not thought of as just communicating concepts of His being, as is the case, for instance, in Islam. Nida is aware of this when he says that "in our faith it is

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[18]Theodore Runyon, Jr., "Friedrich Gogarten," in Martin E. Marty and Dean G. Peerman, A Handbook of Christian Theologians (Cleveland: World, 1965), p. 442.

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God who takes the initiative in communication, and through the Incarnation, both by word and by life, communicates to men."[19]

Ebeling amplifies this theme in his studies of faith as developed by the Reformers and in his concurrent interest in a new understanding of hermeneutic with its relevance for communication:

> The Christian proclamation, when it really knows what it is about, is not like a shop offering all kinds of goods for sale, according to need and taste. But it proclaims the one thing that is absolutely necessary. The one who is absolutely necessary is God . . . . For 'the two belong together, faith and God,' as Luther says in his large catechism (it.) (WA 30,1; 133).[20]

The reality of faith is a consciousness of living in a justified relationship to God through Christ, a belonging together that has dynamic implications for all of life and its relationships.

It is this ultimate point of view that characterizes the Christian faith. In many oriental religions one can adhere to two or more different types because of the absence of the kind of commitment to a faith relationship as seen in Christianity.

The author learned respect for the symbol and ritual

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[19]Eugene A. Nida, Message and Mission (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1960), p. 22.

[20]Ebeling, The Nature of Faith (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1961), pp. 150-51.

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of the primitives of Madagascar among whom he lived and worked for twenty years. However, in their relatedness to the deity, they did not concern themselves with life response as seen in a liberating fellowship. The Tandroy and Tanosy felt safer when God was far away. Man sacrificed for God, not the other way around as in Christianity.

Islam concerns itself with the incomparable transcendence of God. He can act only in His transcendence.

The Hindu focuses on the interior, invisible world as the only genuine reality and seeks wisdom through introspection.

When we speak of Christian faith we must speak of the Gospel. This is the heart of the matter. It is not an object to be believed, but it is the proclamation that opens the door to the faith relationship and gives it continuing subsistence. The Christian faith points to the Word that "became flesh", the center of history and the bringer of the new being. The Gospel as salvation is the good news that heals our brokenness, a new reality beyond our futile strivings. Faith's real resources are from outside the person that is limited and incapable of fulfilling the law's demand that life be a perfect expression of loving relationship to God and to one's neighbor.

The centrality of the Gospel in the matter of faith is the guiding principle that will give basic orientation to communication. In the days of the Reformation also the

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Church was plagued with distorted and dissipated communication because of factors that clouded the above guiding principle. Luther, in his Ninety-five Theses, looked at all that the Church considered valuable to keep and to communicate. He then composed thesis number 62:

> The true treasure of the church is the most holy gospel of the glory and grace of God. (it.)
>
> . . . It is a word of salvation, a word of grace, a word of comfort, a word of joy, a voice of the bridegroom and the bride, a good word, a word of peace.
>
> Therefore the same true glory of God springs from this gospel. At the same time we are taught that the law is fulfilled not by our works but by the grace of God who pities us in Christ and that it shall be fulfilled not through works but through faith, not by anything we offer God, but by all we receive from Christ and partake of in him.[21]

We discover the unique delineation of faith in Christianity also by examining how faith is treated as a concept in the Biblical literature. Ebeling has noted this and bases his conclusions on studies done by others which the reader can refer to in depth. One of these is cited by Ebeling as affirming that "it was only for the Semitic peoples that faith ranked as the highest relation to God."[22]

Both the Old Testament Hebrew basic root for the word, faith, and the Greek used to translate this, support the

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[21]Luther, Works, XXXI, 230-31, "Explanations of the Ninety-five Theses."

[22]Edvard Lehmann, in Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte, 4th edition, 1925, cited by Ebeling, Word and Faith, p. 207.

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above statement. Kittel describes the dominating Hebrew root as meaning "to prop, stay, support, to be faithful." The Hiphil form, says Ebeling, citing Kittel's work, meaning "to lean upon, build upon, to trust, confide, to believe" (Is. 7:9) . . . proves to be the dominating concept in the group.[23] Ebeling makes the following observations to be noted seriously by the person concerned with communicating faith, particularly when the matter of the unique structure of the mass media are considered:

> In connection with religion the root is therefore employed to express God's faithfulness, and in regard to his work (whether promise, threat or command), to express its becoming reality, coming into force, being valid. For that reason God alone can claim faith unconditionally.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> What God says, he also personally sees to, so that to believe the statement of God's Word . . . is not to believe "something", but by definition to believe God. That hangs together with the fact that the content of what God says always unconditionally concerns the person (it.) of the hearer, that is, God's Word rightly understood is never statement but always address.[24]

The Christian has taken this dynamic element of faith into his particular concept as developed in the New Testament. Faith has a particularly meaningful relationship to truth in the Hebrew sense. Ebeling cites H. von Soden's address concerning the Old Testament and Greek views of truth

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[23] Ibid., pp. 207-08. See G. Kittel, Bible Key Words (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951), p. 32.

[24] Ibid., pp. 208-11.

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where he first refers to the Hebrew term and concludes:

> Real is what has a future . . . . Questions of truth for the Hebrew are not really questions about whether something is so or not, but questions about the existence or non-existence of the man himself who is interested in it . . . .[25]

This is of primary importance to the Christian communicator. He is concerned with faith as related to reality and to the existence of man. To communicate faith is to invite to a relationship with God that offers authentic existence and assures of a purposeful future.

This dynamic concept of faith is developed greatly in the New Testament. Ebeling shows how the Hebrew, as the real root of the concept of faith, is drawn from in the various forms of "πιστεύειν" in such a way that "in the history of the concept faith, the New Testament is the place where it is suddenly employed with unusual intensity and is given the stamp that determines its future."[26]

A careful examination of the New Testament words formed from "πιστεύειν", which stand in translation for the Hebrew stem, shows that both the Hebrew and Greek combine the understanding of reliability and trust. Now the words from the stem "πιστ-" begin to take on new meanings in religious categories.

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[25] Ibid., Footnote on p. 208.

[26] Ibid., pp. 207-08.

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Studies of Jesus' concept and use of the words from the root "πιστ-" show that the greater number of them are in sayings attributed to Jesus. They are often in the context of miracle stories, in the logion on the power of faith and in passages relating to the question of authority. In the majority of passages faith is joined to event or to power, as is evidenced in the logion concerning authority (in itsvarious forms) and the idea of faith that "moves mountains".

Not counting the spurious Marcan ending, there are eighty passages in the Sunoptics with eight variant forms from the root "πιστ-", namely, "πιστεύω" (I believe, 30 times), "πίστις" (belief, 24 times), "πιστός" (trusty, faithful, 11 times), "ἄπιστος" (unfaithful, 4 times), "ἀπιστέω" (to be unfaithful, 2 times), "ἀπιστία" (unfaithfulness, 3 times), "ὀλιγόπιστος" (of little faith, 5 times), "ὀλιγοπιστία" (littleness of faith, 1 time). Sixty-three of the above are given as direct speech of Jesus.[27]

The meaning of faith is therefore given a unique and dynamic connotation by Jesus, the implications of which are very strong for the Christian who involves himself in reaching another concerning the matter. Living in a relationship to the God of faith is a relationship that involves authority

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[27] Ibid., p. 224, footnote.

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and power in the daily events of the believer. His own witness to faith is also necessary. Bornkamm also largely supports these conclusions.[28]

Faith gives certainty to existence and is directed to the future (it really brings about the future). It is taking part in the omnipotence of God, a concrete faith in a concrete situation. Finally, with the conjunction of "πίστις" and "σοτερία", faith is the arrival of a saving power, the healing of existence. Faith appears out of encounter with the witness to faith.[29]

If this kind of faith, which is an ultimate concern of life that is given a unique dimension in Christianity, is to appear and become concretized (and communicated), the communicator must be aware of the basic factors involved when faith reaches out to the "other", either that "Other" whom the Christian witness sees as the grounding of faith, or the "other" who enters into the dialogue of the persons engaged in the quest of what it means to be human, to be a person.

To be a person means to be a man of faith, responding to God's call to the faith encounter as evidenced through his Gospel and living in fulfilled relationship with Him and

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[28]See Gunther Bornkamm, Jesus Von Nazareth (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1956), section on "Glaube und Gebet," pp. 119-25.

[29]See Ebeling, Word and Faith, for discussion in depth, p. 240 ff..

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with others.

II. FAITH'S SEARCH FOR A HEARING

Without response, there is no faith. It is necessary, therefore, for the communicator to understand where contact is made to elicit the response of faith. He must also know how faith treats historical elements and the setting of person in the world in an authentic manner.

Point of Contact

The matter of point of contact is not only a theological concern but a very practical one for the person using the mass media. The debate in theological circles alone has had a particular intensity since the raising of many issues by Barth and the rise of dialectical theology. Sellers makes an important assessment:

> In fact, it is only by understanding the issues in the great twentieth century battle over point of contact that we can comprehend the real seriousness of the problem of addressing the outsider by means of mass communication media.[30]

Any successful communication must understand the point of contact. The radio-television communicator (as we shall see in chapters IV and V) has the problem seriously compounded because of the tendency of the media to blur relationships.

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[30]James E. Sellers, The Outsider and the Word of God (New York: Abingdon, 1961), p. 37.

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It was Barth who, in various ways, made the point that only God can create a point of contact and it is beside the point for man to seek to define such a thing, or, having defined it, to make use of his knowledge for effective communication. "Communication of God's word," said Barth, "comes not from special preparation or effort, but from trusting to do the only duty it knows: to oppose, or rather to ignore, unbelief."[31]

It is not surprising that Barth quoted Luther at times in making his point. Luther did make his point that the Gospel can not be helped by man. But Barth gives less attention to the integrity of the person than was Luther's intention. Later on in our study it will be shown how the later Barth revised somewhat his great emphasis on the transcendent.

The debate was heightened by the sparring between Brunner and Barth where Brunner challenged the ultimate implications of Barth's position concerning the "image of God". Brunner challenged the idea that man had lost the image of God completely and the claim that all one talks of is God when referring to point of contact. Brunner made a distinction between a man's ability to hear the Word of God (because he is responsible and can make decisions and has not

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[31]See, for instance Karl Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), pp. 30-31. Barth has written that theology does not concern itself with "exhibiting a point of connection with the divine message to man, but purely in the divine message published and apprehended."

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lost all consciousness of God) and the ability to believe which is created by God's address to man.[32]

This latter, Brunner and others would claim, is not to be identified with what Barth would classify as self-salvation. Barth, of course, was attempting to counterbalance the effects of earlier optimistic liberal theology which had, in his understanding, strayed from the Reformation concept. The question does concern the way the fulfilment of existence offered in God's address becomes existentially appropriated.

Bultmann found categories for his existential examination of the problem by turning to the early Heidegger.[33] Though Heidegger later turned to more ontological categories, his early studies of existence emphasized the importance of "dasein", the "being there" in a situation of "thrownness" that reaches out for the meaning of existence. Bultmann speaks much of this existential concern, of an insecurity of person before a threatening world. This, says Bultmann, is the point of contact. Man's possession of pre-understandings concerning this existence, this "being", is also brought to his encounter with God who addresses him.

This crisis of insecurity, which is only dealt with in a radical confrontation with God, takes on a little different

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[32]Emil Brunner, Nature and Grace (London: Centenary Press, 1946), pp. 31-32

[33]See Martin Heidegger, Being and Time (New York: Harper & Row, 1962).

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meaning than Barth's interpretation of crisis, namely, man's complete acknowledgement of the hopelessness of his situation and his turning from all relationships of person or realities of person, really, and standing only in unbelief when radical encounter involves him.

There are various ways of dealing with what many have called "the Protestant principle" (a phrase used by Tillich, for instance), the notion that, in one sense or another, man can only come to some sort of despair when he comes to the end of his own "human" searchings in his quest of what it means to be a human being.

It is the contention of this study that the very recognition of the nature of this end of one's own limited striving is a basic consideration in seeing the elements in the process of communicating faith. The problems arise when the wrong things are negated and the radical challenge to "be renewed" is based on a denial of personhood and of legitimate and latent searchings of person for fulfilment. The person, however, cannot bring pre-understandings by which he measures the Gospel, but the Gospel as address leads us to recognize in it the opening up of a relationship that does fulfill the needs of person.

As to Luther and Bultmann, possibly we are discovering in contemporary theology that many apparent differences are often partially compounded by matters of semantics. Roger A. Johnson, in his article, "Is Bultmann an 'Heir' of Luther?",

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makes the following analysis concerning one central matter:

> The crisis of conscience is as formative for the total shape of Luther's theology as is the crisis of insecurity for Bultmann. For Luther the root problem of human existence is the problem of conscience which has fallen under the power of the law and which seeks help by means of the law. Correct this fundamental distortion of human existence with the good news of the forgiveness of sins, and all else follows from it . . . . Bultmann, by way of contrast, understands man's insecurity before the world to be precisely the fundamental . . . problem of human existence. Correct man's false understanding of his own insecurity with the call for decision offered by the Kerygma, and all else follows.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> For both, the resources of dogmatics and philosophy finally serve the purpose of articulating the biblical faith as a power reaching out to men in the crisis of their own situations, delivering them from the demonic pressures toward death and allowing them to enter into genuinely new possibilities of life.[34]

The real debate becomes more critical when the search for authentic being (no matter how described) is categorized either as solely concerned with matters of ontology (understood in the sense simply of being, as such) or concerns itself with the metaphysical also. Pre-understandings can become preconceptions and do not allow for the total openness of person to outside resources. Gadamer, the Heidelberg philosopher, for instance, "correctly observes . . . that Bultmann actually operates with a pre-understanding

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[34]Roger Johnson, "Is Bultmann an Heir of Luther?", Dialog, VI (Autumn 1967), 265-75.

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impregnated by theological assumptions."[35]

No matter what the debate, the communicator must be concerned with penetrating accurately the situation of man. All are saying that, in some way, man is always the question. Tillich states pointedly that "the terminology of the question determines the terminology of the answer. We cannot get a clear answer to a vague question."[36]

"Only a man who is already concerned with the matter in question can be claimed for it," adds Ebeling. "Hermeneutic must always in some way or other have a bearing on actualities."[37] For the communicator the important conclusion to be reached is that an over-radicalization of the nature of the "otherness" of God as over against man which results in negation of person makes absurd the entire notion of communication if driven to its ultimate implications. What finally needs to be realized is that to speak of God is to be concerned with man's reality.

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[35]Hans Gadamer, Wahrheit Und Methode (Tubingen: Mohr, 1960). Cited by Carl Braaten, History and Hermeneutics (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966), p. 135

[36]See Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), II, 13. Cited by Sellers, op. cit., 0. 50. See also Heinrich Ott, Theology and Preaching (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1965), p. 153, concerning meaning of the "disclosure of the human situation."

[37]Ebeling, "The Word of God and Hermeneutic," in James A. Robinson and John B. Cobb, Jr., (eds.), New Frontiers in Theology (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), II, 96.

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The resources of the Gospel are brought to real and basic needs of person in crisis of conscience and of insecurity of being. Full communication takes place only when faith becomes free and trusting relationship with the God of the Gospel.

The Problem of History

Much current discussion centers on the sense in which faith's search for a hearing and its concern about point of contact is related to the historical.

There are new questionings concerning dialectical theology which tended to consider historical objectification, in almost any sense, as an irrelevant matter. The kerygma, the real proclamation, so the argument went, is separate from history and the faith relationship proceeds on a totally incorrect basis when it fastens its attention on the historical. We will just touch on the matter here, but it is of major importance for the communicator as he contemplates radio-television as his media and wonders about the essence and nature of the message that faces peculiar problems arising out of the media's structure.

This is not the place to enter the discussion about what history actually is. A large spectrum of views can be discovered all the way from the fundamentalist's almost total attention to the facts of the past (certain ones) and accompanying risk of missing larger meanings and present histori-

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city of existence, to the opposite pole of a complete denial of the importance of the historical in any sense in matters of faith.

Van Harvey's recent book devotes all of its pages to a challenge to all groups, particularly the dialectical theologians, to avoid the paradox of claiming no interest in the historical, yet, at the same time, basing the larger outlines of the faith relationship on some things that did happen in history.[38] He reminds also that "it can be argued, all reliable historiography rests on some such distinction as whether or not something actually happened; whether it happened in the way it is told or in some other way."[39]

When one comes to the central figure of Jesus there are dangers of ambiguities, of saying contradictory things, when the matter of faith as encounter is faced. Christian faith has no basis, in the final analysis, unless it relates to the historical Jesus both in its conception and in its continuing dynamic.

The so-called "quest of the historical Jesus" resulted in different men finding the Jesus each had preconceived.

Ernst Kasemann, James M. Robinson and others have been

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[38] V. A. Harvey, The Historian and the Believer (New York: Macmillan, 1966).

[39] Ibid., p. 34. Harvey refers to the quote of August Schlegel in Ernst Cassirer, Problems of Knowledge (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950).

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concerned about a new quest, the latter claiming that by new historical methods modern man can be confronted with what he calls the selfhood of Jesus. Robinson questions the ambiguous position of Tillich, Bultmann and Barth by concluding that "the Jesus of the kerygma could equally well be only a myth, for one has in fact declared the meaning of his historical person irrelevant."[40]

We do meet the Jesus of history in the Gospel accounts. The communicator discovers the larger dimensions of relating person to the God of person as revealed in Jesus, aware of the problems and also the relevancy of history, but avoiding the clouding of the communication through the media by inordinate objectification of what becomes the object of faith. Where the media have the danger of distorting person, caution must be used.

Pannenberg, leader in a new "historical" school with considerable influence, speaks much about the historical nature of faith itself and the necessity for the communicator to recall, even in the climactic event of the resurrection, that:

> . . . We do not really know even yet what happened to Jesus then nor what kind of reality the Risen One may have in relation to our present life. Only metaphorically can we speak of this. The most that we can really know (it.) is whether or not Easter witnesses were

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[40]James M. Robinson, The New Quest of the Historical Jesus (Naperville: Allenson, 1959), p. 44. See also similar views in Bornkamm, op. cit..

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> confronted by a reality which we too can comprehend only in terms of that parabolic word of eschatological expectation: resurrection from the dead . . . .
>
> Without the resurrection of Jesus his message would have turned out to be a fanatical audacity.[41]

Carl Braaten warns of ambiguities and, in speaking of Gogarten, claims that the discussion was changed from the "dialectic of law and gospel, which they consequently never confronted, to a modern concept of history, which no one yet seems to understand."[42]

The radio-television communicator will beware, however, of the danger of just repeating what is considered historical fact without giving attention to the person in present reality and his own historicness. He must strive for relevancy and catch the attention of the receiver where he is rather than just rely on repetition of "something that happened." The latter approach tends to have the overall notion of an "automatic" communication, a factor to be dealt with in chapter five.

Sponheim makes the interesting observation that fundamentalism tends to place the major stress of the faith relationship as that of great separation where God seems to disappear, and that this, in turn, causes the compensatory tendency to focus on some definite "X", even a historical

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[41]Wolfhart Pannenberg, "The Revelation of God in Jesus," in Robinson, New Frontiers in Theology, III, 115-16.

[42]Braaten, op. cit., p. 17.

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fact, as the "present of God". He also suggests dangers of a similar nature in the neo-orthodox position which views God and man as great opposites, as in paradox, an encounter between opposites at the same time that it is a relationship, but where the focus is often put on the "paradoxical passion of faith" which tends to crowd out both the horizontal and the vertical and, again, where the very historical reality of the Christ is attacked.[43]

The Affirmation of World

The fact that God stands in vital continuing relationship to creation, including that of person, means ultimately that faith does affirm world as over against the distortion that claims faith means negation of world. This is a misinterpretation of the thrust of the meaning of faith. Liberation from the domination of world not grounded in God does not mean that faith is not exercised in (speaking of the sphere) the world. As faith relates to life it relates to world. Though the situation of the world as over against existence is changed because of the "the one-for-all event of Christ", faith does not turn from the world in abdication.

The Christian is not called to be "spiritual" by living in a spiritual region. He must not deny his humanity nor make an absurdity of God's creation by separating his very person from reality and turning to the transcendent.

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[43]Sponheim, op. cit., p. 64.

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When transcendence confronts person with true wholeness it is in the world at the same time that it is beyond bondage to a world view that has no meaning related to transcendence.

Gnosticism sought to take person into the world of the spirit. The ultimate of turning from the world would be mystic contemplation in total isolation. Many, including Luther, walked this path, only to discover that this is not the real meaning of I John 2:15 ff., "Do not love the world . . .", which does not ultimately mean separating the self from the world of life realities. The faith relationship involves being shown "the path of life" (Ps. 16:11) in a real world.

Faith discovers God's world, a world <u>for</u> man. Faith enters the world and history with the dimension of knowledge of God as its Lord. It is not captured by the "lusts of the world" which are a denial of God and a distortion of person.

James M. Robinson claims that one can chart the overall Theological "trajectories" in the development of the Church by observing the nature of these trajectories in the frame of reference of either denial or affirmation of "world".[44]

What have been adjudged heresies of faith have most often involved a distorted denial of world, such as

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[44]James M. Robinson, "World in the New Theology and in New Testament Theology," (Mimeographed.).

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Manichaeism, Albigensianism and Jansenism. Radical Puritanism also illustrated such a distortion.

Abdication from world often involves a similar disinterest in the world of facts, in the search for all dimensions of truth. "Man must act," says Bockelman, "even if he is not quite sure that he has all the correct answers; . . . The doctrine of grace . . . holds that God forgives for mistakes."[45] But, the continuing search for truth and for answers finds its framework and larger delineation in God's address to man in the Gospel.

One can not appeal to Luther to find denial of world. Forell, leading American interpreter of Luther's social ethics, finds that, as Luther taught concerning the two realms of existence (the secular and the spiritual),". . . the secular realm was also God's realm."[46] When the communicator speaks to person via radio-television it is of basic import that he recognize the following truth further spoken by Forell:

> Actions, faculties, beings, and standards are good or evil not in a static sense, so that if their value is once described it will hold true forever, but in a dynamic sense, i.e., according to their function of helping or hindering the all-important relationship between God

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[45]Wilfred Bockelman, "The College--a Matter of Mission," St. Olaf Bulletin, LXIII:8 (December 1967).

[46]George Forell, Faith Active in Love (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1954), p. 15.

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and man.[47]

It is God's world. In Christ "all things hold together." (Col. 1:16). The faith relationship gives us understanding of responsibility in this world. In this context the Church is prepared to speak to the world.

Sigurd Aske, the first general director of the Lutheran World Federation Broadcasting Service, illustrated the point clearly in his address at the opening ceremony for "Radio Voice of the Gospel" in Addis Ababa:

> "Proclaiming Christ to His World" is our broadcasting motto. The Christian Church is doing a far better job talking to itself than in proclaiming Christ to the world. Being aware of this weakness may help avert the danger of Radio Voice of the Gospel degenerating into an extremely expensive international Christian house-telephone.[48]

The media force the Church to get at essentials. To fail to do this leads to very expensive irrelevancies and dangers.

To summarize, the definition of the nature of the essential message of the Church determines its approach to the media. Faith is the determinative element of Christianity. It is a free and trusting relationship to God who addresses man in the Gospel as seen in Jesus Christ. It is, therefore, encounter and continuing fellowship with God that gives ultimate meaning to person. This relationship,

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[47] Ibid., pp. 54-55.

[48] Sigurd Aske, "A New Voice," (Mimeographed.)

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initiated and sustained by God, speaks to man's deepest needs in his search for what it means to be a person, to live creatively in this world in relationship to others as he understands the dimensions that reach beyond space and time. These are the basic understandings that the communicator must bring to radio-television as he seeks to give form to his message.

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CHAPTER III

THE STRUCTURE OF FAITH IN THE FRAME OF REFERENCE OF PERSON

The reference point of the faith relationship is person. To understand the basics of faith's encounter and to relate this to the communication of faith, particularly when involving radio-television, demands a comprehension in depth of what we mean when we say "person", and, how faith relates in more detailed fashion to the phenomenon of person. This chapter pursues such a study in preparation for a succeeding examination of the structure of radio-television as it concerns person.

The communicator must avoid getting entangled with the structure of "things". If Christian faith is encounter and fellowship, then "the person is the divine plan of our life," says Tournier. "The world of things does not commit us . . . . It is the person that has meaning, a birth and an end . . . . To discover the world of person . . . means a complete revolution . . . ."[1]

The proponents of personalism properly state that a definition of values in the universe transcending any relationship to person defies rational statement.[2] It does not

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[1]Paul Tournier, The Meaning of Persons (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957), pp. 176-83.

[2]See Edgar S. Brightman, "Personality as a Metaphysical Principle," in his Personalism and Theology (Boston: University Press, 1943), pp. 40-63.

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fit in with the Christian idea of values growing out of the faith relationship. The relationship of faith, says Buber, concerns the entire being.[3]

It is only person that can be really known and can know in return. This is the thrust of Gal. 4:9, "But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God . . . ." Man knows of himself, then, in comprehending that God has known him.[4] God wants to be known. He speaks to man, to the person. Man is not a fragmented person but a totality, just as the biblical picture of man combines into a unity the notions of "σῶμα" (body), "σάρξ" (flesh), "ψυχή" (mind or soul), and "νοῦς" (mind). The "πνεῦμα" also is thought of as the whole man to whom God speaks.

The Bible itself is a picture of a succession of dialogues, God speaking to men, the dialogue that makes man a person brought into the fellowship with God.

The self cannot be made secure in itself. A humanism that is not Christian, which would "set the self apart . . . becomes a useless passion, hemmed in on every side by other selves and headed at last, and so even now, to the grave."[5] Conversely, even fundamentalism, with its speaking of the

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[3]Martin Buber, Two Types of Faith (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1951), pp. 7-8.

4. Gogarten has used the first paragraph of Galatians Chapter four as a major frame of reference for his Reality of Faith (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1959).

[5]Paul Sponheim, Contemporary Forms of Faith (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1967), p. 36.

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personal in a restricted way, can miss the idea of the integrity of person in wholeness.

The early Barth stressed the abysmal gulf separating man from God, but even so he comes to the point of saying:

> One might say that men love God not when they enjoy the satisfactions of religion but when veritably and existentially, quite clearly and once for all, without possibility of avoidance or escape, they encounter the Question: "Who then am I?" For the contrasted and inevitable "Thou" involved in this question is--God."[6]

This does not mean that the relationship is grasped automatically by the human mind. Nevertheless, faith is finding God in one's own life, the God who speaks in the Gospel. It is not just assent, or simple belief without commitment.

It was Jesus himself who gave the highest place to human personality. In a day when the value of life was cheap, he showed the worth of the person.

The faith relationship, through Jesus Christ, is the fulfilling of the covenant relationship, a mutual thing. "Moreover, exactly in this way," says Barth in his later writings, "Jesus Christ, as this Mediator and Reconciler between God and man, is also the Revealer (it.) of them both . . ., the fullness of their togetherness . . . ."[7] In this same

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[6]Karl Barth, The Epistle To the Romans (London: Oxford University Press, 1933).

[7]Karl Barth, The Humanity of God (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1960), p. 47.

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writing Barth contrasted the earlier over-emphasis on the gulf between man and God.

An examination of this "person" is in order as it stands in the faith relationship--the basic elements of person, the person in relationship, in inter-personal encounter, person in a real world, yet both liberated and fulfilled through the faith relationship. As these categories are related to the structures of communication itself, the communicator will constantly relate the general principles to an authentic communication that will involve integrity for both message and media.

I. THE BASIC ELEMENTS OF PERSON

The many overtones (some emotional) of the word "personal" cloud the issue of person. The term has what are called both denotative and connotative meanings to many, especially in the reference to faith.

To some, the word "personal" has purely existential connotations, referring to authentic being, although they find difficulties in defining this or describing its quthentic base. Presuppositions sometimes automatically restrict a genuine openness to resources for person, including the metaphysical, and there are probabilities of not facing squarely the fact of the limitations of man and his person in isolation.

Even so, the faith encounter, as it does involve per-

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son, is also an existential one. There is a "personal" understanding of this encounter. However, the dangers arise for the communicator when there is confusion between personal and "pietistic", or, person and "passion", where "personal" takes on the color of introversion as over against the primary nature of person as in relationship, in dialogue--reaching out and discovering.

Introverted attention to person can begin to usurp the place of faith and to distort it. Healthy fellowship, either with God or with others, is warped by an attempt to authenticate faith by personal passion. In its ultimate nature, person is not introvert. One is not more "personal" when he is more self-oriented. In the framework of faith relationship, person is other-oriented and God-oriented. Real concern for person, for the authentic self, paradoxically drives one "outward", to health in living in communication and dialogue. The distorted person (the psychotic) has problems with relatedness and communication. Something has broken down.

The observations of social scientists, philosophers and other students of person are helpful in supplying categories for the orientation of faith in the frame of reference of person. Brightman says that " . . . personality can be known only because a person can know something besides the

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present moment of its existence."[8] The distinguished scholar, Ernst Cassirer, defined the essence of humanity in the same manner, as characterized by a free consciousness roaming widely over cultural space and time, not tied to reflex of chemical or biological reactions. Cassirer develops this in his Essay On Man by saying that "man is declared to be that creature who is constantly in search of himself--a creature who in every moment of his existence must examine and scrutinize the conditions of his existence."[9] Kant likewise points out the uniqueness of the person in that it can make a distinction between reality and possibility. As a philosopher interested in the relationship between what he calls "philosophical faith" and metaphysical revelation, Karl Jaspers still feels that all reality for the person is phenomenal, based only on the subject-object dichotomy as related to consciousness. Yet, he concludes that "we are conscious of objects we mean . . . . On the subject side like consciousness at large, existence, the mind . . . ; on the object side like the world and Transcendence."[10]

All of these definitions show that there is no room for just a mechanistis idea of person or selfhood, but only

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[8]Brightman, op. cit., p. 47.

[9]Ernst Cassirer, Essay On Man (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944), p. 6.

[10]Karl Jaspers, Philosophical Faith and Revelation (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), pp. 61-62.

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for reaching out for meaningful relatedness. This is the goal and the possibility of person.

Hutchison speaks of the development of the person described above:

> When selfhood emerges, a radically new dimension of life with new kinds of responses opens up . . . . Man becomes something new, namely, a self confronting a world . . . . The new features of the emergent human situation are rooted in a single aspect of man's mind or selfhood. It may be called self-transcendence, or simply transcendence."[11]

Self-awareness, then, defines selfhood; yet, it is awareness not in isolation but in relationship and relatedness. Brightman points out that personality is more than just psychological awareness of it and that, while men such as Stagner and Allport agree on the element of individuality, Allport would not consider that personality is just an abstraction from behaviour but, along with Bowne and Knudsen, it is consciousness. It allows for the question that "the metaphysician, and not the psychologist, must ask: what is the true value of human existence? What is the status of personal values in the universe?"[12]

McConnell has shown that, in contrast to a hard-and-fast material world self-sufficient on its own account which interprets the self on the basis of sensationalism or associ-

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[11]James A. Hutchison, Language and Faith (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963), pp. 24-27.

[12]Brightman, op. cit., pp. 49-53.

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ationalism, the proponents of this view are forced to inject into their thought something that gives a unity, a sort of active self, to make it possible for the sensations to associate. Otherwise there is only nihilism and skepticism resulting. He refers to Green who insisted that the "somebody which the holders of the associationalistic view thus appropriated, could be none other than the self . . . ."[13]

Tournier's insights are particularly helpful for the Christian communicator's understanding of person. A major point is that of the difference that exists between the person and the personage. The personage is something that the authentic person invents, what the person wears in public, an appearance, which makes it difficult to grasp the true reality of the person. We search for what is our person but are always limited, even in seeking it in others. The communicator appreciates the following comment:

> We become fully conscious only of what we are able to express to someone else . . . . All that is mechanical in man, every physical or psychical phenomenon, is of the order of the personage, and not of the person . . . . Information speaks of personages. Communion touches the person.[14]

The person who reflects a bit will recall how one's conception of his self in relationship changes according to the person with whom he is talking. Gesture, tone, manner--

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[13]Francis T. McConnell, also citing Thomas Hill Green in "Bowne and Personalism," in Brightman, op. cit., p. 23.

[14]Paul Tournier, op. cit., pp. 21-22.

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all of them usually change somewhat. The danger in it all is that we become "slaves of the personage we have invented . . . or has been imposed on us . . . . 'We strive continually', wrote Pascal, 'to adorn and preserve our imaginary self, neglecting the true one.'"[15]

It is the matter of the person which is the key to reality and authenticity. Faith should unlock person, and person-to-person. Tournier quotes the following three men to substantiate this truth: first, Stocker, as saying that "It is the spiritual . . . which makes the person." Again, Maeder, "Faith is essentially the affair of the person," the theme of an address at the international congress on psychotherapy in Leyden in 1951. Finally, von Orelli's formula: "The person--a dialogue," a dialogue with God . . . "involving acceptance of responsibility . . . before him."[16]

It is very possible that there are variables in the basic relationships of person in changing cultures, including ways in which person is touched, how it reacts. Though viewed with caution, there is possibly room for some truth in the more frequently proposed notion that the media themselves make a new kind of man. Probably it is a matter of degree in which individuality of the self is determinative in many matters. It could be argued that media-oriented man is getting

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[15] Ibid., p. 161.

[16] Ibid., p. 161.

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more tribal, and this could also be somewhat true in matters of faith relationships and understandings. The investigator has often noted in the primitive areas of Madagascar that decision making was often tribal and the totality of the community life (and, indeed, of the ancestors and even the unborn children) was fused into the consciousness.

A consideration of the person to which faith relates must take into account the present age where, as Haskell Miller states, "Technology is shrinking the world, filling it up with people, and forcing all people into increasingly interdependent relationships."[17] There is more consciousness that is expressed in community.

However, no matter how complicated the web of relationships becomes, it seems that the person is the determinative element. The issue of person just becomes more critical, such as Huxley so graphically claims in his Brave New World of organization and specialization, security and comfort, where the essential understanding of person is lost.[18]

The real self is always a unique self. With every distortion of person there will be an equal distortion of the understanding of faith.

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[17]Haskell Miller, A Christian Critique of Culture (Nashville: Abingdon, 1965), p. 41.

[18]Aldous Huxley, Brave New World (New York: Harper and Row, 1932).

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II. PERSON IN RELATIONSHIP

To understand faith as relationship and its relevance to person, an understanding of person also in relationship is necessary. Four elements are uppermost here, particularly when considering the faith encounter, namely, the concept of God as person, the person as addressed, the relationship of language and person (with some relevant insights by the discoveries of the New Hermeneutic), and, finally, the person in inter-personal relationships, particularly as important to faith.

God as Person

The Christian understanding of God is of a Being Who can communicate. Otherwise the person's reaching out would be to nothingness. "Religion," writes Hartshorne, "would seem a vast fraud." Considering the essence of person, he concludes, "What is a person if not a being qualified and conditioned by social relations . . . ? And what is God if not the supreme case of personality?"[19]

Barth develops in his own way Hartshorne's concept of the "divine relativity" by saying that "it is precisely God's deity (it.) which, rightly understood, includes his humanity

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[19]Charles Hartshorne, The Divine Relativity (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948), p. 25.

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(it.)." He is the "partner of man."[20]

If God is conceived of only in the sense of ultimate being, person could not communicate with Him. So, even the more existentially oriented theologian, such as Tillich, speaks of the encounter with God with the "highest of what we ourselves are, person."[21] Following Buber's lead, he insists on the two-way character of every genuine religious experience.

References in Chapter II to the Biblical understanding of faith, especially the thrust of the Hebrew and Greek roots, have pointed to the above fact. The communicator must always come back to the certainty of Jesus as the certainty of the person of God and the certainty of the communication of faith. We are also brought to the Galatians chapter four concept of person in relationship as an awareness of being, a knowledge that comes about when a person is "known of God." The awareness comes about through faith. Buber says that "the duality of I and Thou finds its fulfillment in the religious relationship." He would neither confine God to the transcendent nor to the immanent. God is "knowable Being from whom all meaning comes."[22]

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[20]Barth, The Humanity of God, p. 46.

[21]See Paul Tillich, Theology of Culture (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 61, pp. 189 ff.

[22]Martin Buber, The Eclipse of God (Harper & Row, 1957), pp. 28-33.

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Person as Addressed

If God is Being who communicates (even anthropomorphically speaking), then the person in relationship finds definition in that it is addressed. God's person, Christ's person is for us, addressed to us. The Christ event is meaningless, as Luther claimed, unless "you believe firmly that Christ is given you and that his birth has occurred for your own good."[23] Luther continues, "Only when . . . he becomes my King and my priest, serves me, sheds his holiness and wills to be a sinner, saying 'I will suffer for you'--there the Christ begins."[24] The event "points to the man . . . intended by Christ and God in this use."[25] The event has the element of address. It is a word by which something is accomplished. The person is addressed, and the address is more than a pure discursive communication of so many objective words. Our theology of word is coming to a deeper understanding of this fact. It is a basic element dealt with in the New Hermeneutic.

Proclamation is authenticated by awareness of person as addressed. In proclamation God promises himself. "This,"

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[23]Martin Luther, Werke, (Weimar: Bohlau, 1883-19--), X: 1, 71.

[24]Ibid., XL:1, 188.

[25]Gogarten, op. cit., pp. 128-32.

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says Ebeling, "is the certainty of Christian faith." And, again, "A man can . . . promise God to another as the One who promises himself . . . . Man speaks because he is addressed."[26] Authentic address is creative address. It is creative because person is involved on both sides of the relationship. Wilder speaks of the word as address and the word as meaning, indebted much to Ebeling's discussion of the relation of the Greek logos to the Biblical word. His concern is that address is not only a saving us from non-being (using ontological categories) but brings meaning. He claims that we must not allow new Hermeneutic to have the connotation of creative word speaking to man in only a partial "a-cultural sense", but that the word of address leads to a greater fulfilment of creative person in its own right, of which more will be spoken at the end of this chapter.[27] This, the author believes, is a basic element that must be dealt with for proper communication through radio-television.

Faith is an answer to address, to proclamation.[28] The heart of Ebeling's thought concerning the word as address is

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[26]Ebeling, The Nature of Faith (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1961), pp. 190-91.

[27]Amos Wilder, "The Word as Address and the Word as Meaning," in James A. Robinson and John B. Cobb, Jr., New Frontiers in Theology (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), II, 198-218.

[28]See Ernst Fuchs, "Response to the American Discussion," in Robinson, Ibid., II, 240.

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found his his statement:

> Proclamation that has taken place is to become proclamation that takes place . . . .
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> . . . . . .
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> It is proclamation of what the text has proclaimed. The text by means of the sermon becomes a hermeneutical aid in the understanding of present experience. Where that happens radically, there true word is uttered, and that in fact means God's word.[29]

Ebeling asserts that this takes place in the pattern of law and gospel, the address to person under the law. Similarly, Ott, in his hermeneutical principle (or, "arch"), says that proclamation must speak to man's existential concern.[30] This, in effect would relate to Luther's wide definition of the law as seen in the very structure of things around man that presses in upon him.

Language and Person

"Human consciousness," says Jaspers, "originated with langauage, and is tied to language. It is the one place in the world where the line is drawn between all other types of

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[29]Ebeling, "The Word of God and Hermeneutic," in Robinson, ibid., II, 107-09.

[30]See Heinrich Ott, "What is Systematic Theology?" in Robinson, op. cit., I, 79. See also Ebeling, Word and Faith (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1963), pp. 386-406, and "Verantworten des Glaubens in Begegnung mit dem Denken M. Heideggers," Zeitschrift fur Theologie und Kirche, (September 1961). See also Carl Braaten, History and Hermeneutics (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966), pp. 142-44.

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consciousness . . . from our consciousness of aimed thought."[31] "Language is the body of our spirit," says Ebeling.[32]

The communicator who uses the mass media and is so dependent on language alone must recognize this nature of language as over against the idea of words objectifying things, or, one might say, talking about things of the spirit. The students of symbol and sign, such as Cassirer, emphasize that language is primarily the symbolic embodiment of feelings and affections rather than objective ideas as such.[33] To understand person this way opens the door to effective communication. Person in relationship finds actual definition by language in the sense of Funk's phrase, "What we see is presided over by what we can say . . . ."[34]

Hutchison defines language as that which articulates the human self, although symbolic articulation is not the only activity of the self, a cautionary statement for hermeneuticians who overemphasize discursive communication.[35] In line with our interpretation of the self as over against the

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[31]Jaspers, op. cit., p. 63.

[32]Ebeling, God and Word (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), p. 2.

[33]Cassirer, op. cit., p. 25.

[34]Robert W. Funk, Language, Hermeneutic, and Word of God (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), pp. xii-xiii.

[35]Hutchison, op. cit., pp. 47-48.

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faith relationship, Hutchison pictures the "self as a value-oriented and value-laden form of reality," and "the basic values of a self . . . are said or uttered in expressive language . . . in a form of religious language called confession or witness."[36]

Authentic language is difficult to define. Modern technology and standardizing communication can also submerge authentic language. Language may not be less authentic just because it has the element of myth. It is a Western tendency to so demythologize and subject communication to fragmented analysis that meaning on a deeper level can disappear. Eliade quotes Jung as having this suspicion, believing the following:

> . . . The crisis of the modern world is in great part due to the fact that the Gristian symbols and 'myths' are no longer lived by the whole human being; that they have been reduced to words and gestures deprived of life, fossilized and therefore no longer of any use for the deeper life of the psyche.[37]

What is most important to remember, however, is that language partakes of person. If, in this way, existence is linguistic, then the nature of language is the nature of the person. The self, the person is sinful. Language must also partake of this sinfulness which is also a brokenness, a

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[36] Ibid., p. 53.

[37] Mircea Eliade, Myths, Dreams and Mysteries (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1960), p. 29.

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failure to embody perfect love. The person of faith is therefore humble in respect to his own language and generous as a listener.

In the matter of language of proclamation addressing person, Ebeling interprets Luther's insights as follows:

> It is the peculiarity of Luther's expository writings that he knew no fundamental difference between proclamation and scientific exegesis. This unity of theology and proclamation was for Luther not a heritage of his traditional scientific pursuits, but the fruit of an original new conception of the Word of God and had its model in Paul, in a very limited form also in Augustine. This new conception of God's Word was worthy to be passed on.[38]

The implications of the above thoughts concerning language and person for the communicator who is so basically dependent on language is this: faith as relationship is a response to God's word of address, a creative event involving the witness of person communicating the Gospel invitation to faith, not anonymously, not objectively, but personally. It is in this fasion also that language gives the element of intentionality to faith--the direction of the relationship.

Ebeling, in his description of the relationship of God and man as one of word and faith, bases his reasoning, as this study largely does, on the question of "what constitutes man's being as person, i.e., the question of man's being

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[38]Ebeling, Evangelische Evangelienauslegung (Munchen: Evangelischer Verlag Albert Lampp, 1942), pp. 11-12.

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before God."[39] The very word itself is of intrinsic importance as interpretation just because it is word, able to clarify and give life. It is Ebeling's claim that later orthodoxy tended to distort Luther's view of the oral nature of the word, versus the idea of an isolated carrier of meanings. Ebeling's claim, critical one, is based on Luther's statements, such as this:

> The things (res) are preceptors. One cannot make sense of the words if he does not understand the things (res). Therefore Musterus often errs because he does not understand the things (res). I myself have explained more passages through knowledge of the things than the grammarians by other knowledge. If the lawyers were not to understand the things (res), nobody would understand the words. Therefore, the study of the things (res)--that's the thing.[40]

And again, concerning the relationship of letter and spirit: ". . . For the words are subject to and have to give way to the things (res), not the things (res) to the words, and the utterance rightly follows the meaning, and the letter follows the spirit."[41] In Luther's Kirchenpostille, 1522, he spoke firmly of the original oral

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[39]Ebeling, "The New Hermeneutics and the Early Luther," Theology Today, XXI:I(April 1964), 34.

[40]Ebeling, "Word of God and Hermeneutic," p. 96. Citing Luther, op. cit., "Tischreden" V, 26.11-16, no. 5246.

[41]Ibid., citing Luther, op. cit., "Tischreden" V, 634.14-16.

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intention of the New Testament writings.[42]

Luther reminded that the written Word received in the Scriptures are given an effective dynamic as they are brought to life before the people, word that is truly communicated word. He compared the oral nature of the Gospel as over against the law "which was written on tablets and was a dead writing . . . . But the Gospel is committed to the living and most free voice poured out into the ears of the hearers."[43]

From the foregoing, the following important conclusion emerges for the communicator, especially where "authentic" matters of faith are spoken of that relate to person: language itself is given a very important place in actual communication over and above other factors that make the media

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[42]Luther is cited by Ebeling in the same chapter, footnote, p. 86, as making the following striking statements in his Werke, X:1 pt. 1, 625.12-628.8; 17.4-18.1; X:1 pt. 2, 34.12-35. : ". . . In the New Testament the sermons are to be spoken aloud in public and to bring forth in terms of speech and hearing what was formerly hidden in the letter and in secret vision. That, too, is why Christ himself did not write his teaching, as Moses did his, but delivered it orally, also commanded to deliver it orally and gave no command to write it . . . . For that reason it is not at all the manner of the New Testament to write books of Christian doctrine, but there should everywhere, without books, be good, learned, spiritually minded, diligent preachers to draw the living word from the ancient Scriptures and constantly bring it to life before the people, as the apostles did. For before ever they wrote, they had preached to and converted the people by word of mouth, which also was their real apostolic and New Testament work . . . . That books had to be written, however, is at once a great failure and a weakness of spirit that was enforced by necessity, and not by the manner of the New Testament."

[43]Ebeling, Evangelische Evangelienauslegung, p. 97, citing Luther, op. cit., 526.12-16.

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communicator hesitant over the power of words for personal impact. Word is creative just in its being authentic word. The person is involved in the language event not in a situation primarily of being convinced by objective thought or ideas where the notion of strong reference to face-to-face personal confrontation must supply the only potential, but the very language has intrinsically the understanding and interpretation which relates to the hearer insofar as it is authentic language. The Gospel, as God's final authentic word, leads to authentic fellowship with God and with others. There are no "magic" words that automatically lead to this fellowship in a mechanistic way.

The Word that God addresses to person is effective word, according to Luther, and in this way differs from the word of man, as his statement shows: "What God says, he does. God continues to speak and by the power of his Word all things exist, live and function."[44] This does not mean that language, as the "organ of love", is christological, as Fuchs claims, where one could have Christ outside of what we have described as the faith relationship involving person.[45]

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[44]Lennart Pinomaa, Faith Victorious (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1963), citing Luther, op. cit., XXXIII, 117 (1527).

[45]Ernst Fuchs, "The New Testament and the Hermeneutical Problem," in Robinson, op. cit., pp. 111-145.

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There is danger of over-anthropomorphism of the concept of conveying meaning through language. Ultimate meaning, even of such things as the event of the Cross, must be more than just language content. Language partakes of fellowship but does not automatically circumscribe fellowship, especially in the faith encounter. There is the danger of congealing encounter in such a way that the genius of hearing with openness to that which might be foreign becomes, as Kasemann states as a reservation concerning the New Hermeneutic, "the death of understanding, the strangling of the real question, the missing of the change to grow by learning."[46]

Language partakes of the symbolic, but it is not only through discursive language that man embodies his symbolic expression of his experience or his understandings. The less concrete, more deeply symbolic non-discursive forms can communicate understandings of reality on different levels. Language, however, to be fused with person, must be authentic. It may also be unspoken, giving body and direction to our consciousness and our thought.

The Development of Faith in Interpersonal Encounter

Faith is not only related to person in the I-thou

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[46]Robinson, New Frontiers in Theology, II, 43, citing Kasemann, "Zum Thema der urchristlichen Apokalyptic," Zeitschrift fur Theologie und Kirche, LIX (1962), 258.

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encounter with God who addresses the person (primarily as seen in Christ), but, in the same manner as consciousness of being a person leads to verifying understanding by relatedness to others, so also the word of faith addressed to person speaks to interpersonal relationships. "The notion of the person," says Tournier, "is bound up with the human community, a spiritual solidarity, a common patrimony . . . ."[47] This is a brake on an over-emphasis on individualism when one speaks of "personal" communication and when one ponders the media.

Tournier spoke of the "personage" as a rather artificial phenomenon. However, he reminds us:

> Instead of turning backs on the outside world and concentrating on our own inner life, where the true nature of the person always eludes us, we must look outwards, towards the world, towards our neighbour, towards God.[48]

The communication of faith, particularly under the limitations of the media, must strive to build community and capitalize on the interpersonal facet of the verification of understanding. Hutchison, particularly, speaks out against the notion of individualism with identity at the center of the circle of self alone. He presents the intriguing formula of the self rather as an ellipse with two focal points,

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[47] Tournier, op. cit., p. 75.

[48] Ibid., p. 81.

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individuality and community. He claims:

> Man is inherently both an individual and a member of community. . . . The realization or fulfillment of both individual identity and community is essential to self-fulfillment. . . .
>
> Selves, in any actual or engaged sense of the word, do not occur cooped up in their own subjectivity, but in relation to a world that includes both objects and other selves.[49]

There would seem to be here the possibility of some elasticity in adaptation to man under different cultural conditions, whether they be of change from more individualistic to tribal, or whether, as Nida suggests, there is contrast between what he calls "urban societies" as over against face-toface societies, such as the folk and the primitive type.[50]

More than verification, faith is actually a way of accomplishing relationships. We bring meaning and world view to every encounter at the same time as the integrity of person is respected. We give the other a chance to give.

As faith involves relationship, so authentic person seeks and is part of the I-Thou relationship as described by Buber:

> I become through my relation to the Thou (it.); as I become I (it.), I say Thou (it.).

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[49]Hutchison, op. cit., pp. 48-49.

[50]Eugene A. Nida, Message and Mission (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1960), pp. 94-136.

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All real living is meeting.[51]

Buber contrasts the primary I-Thou (it.) relationship involving the whole being to the relationship of I-it (it.) which has, rather, a thing for its object. Faith both seeks and creates fellowship in interpersonal encounter. Faith is concerned with truth, the truth about life, about being; truth, in turn, is dialogic in nature.[52]

The question must be asked: In what sense is the consciousness of the form of faith subject to the claim of Tournier that "we become fully conscious only of what we are able to express to someone else."[53] Chapter five will discuss the import of this for the media communicator. It isn't only "mechanisms of the mind" that interplay in a simple behavioral pattern. Mutual definition is not limited to some sort of psychological interplay of Freudian, Jungian or Adlerian interpretations (all of which might contribute to knowledge of person). The interpersonal encounter (dialogue of person) is a deeper reality.

Many recent church studies are pointing more and more to a picture of faith contrary to the thoroughly "privatized" phenomenon often conceived. The Commission of Theology of

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[51]Martin Buber, I and Thou (Edinburgh: Clark, 1937), p. 11.

[52]See Cassirer, op. cit., p. 5 for good discussion.

[53]Tournier, op. cit., p. 22.

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the Lutheran World Federation has submitted a working paper on "Jesus' Teaching and Society", making reference to the Sermon on the Mount where "discipleship" through faith that brings a change of heart makes a man "free to meet his neighbor." It concludes, again appealing to Luther, that, to Luther, "faith is not turned inward, as though it existed for the believer himself. Any tendency to regard religion as a private matter having to do only with the 'inner man' allows the neighbor to disappear . . . ."[54]

The faith relationship, as involving person, seeks both definition and fulfilment in interpersonal relationship sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

III. PERSON IN A REAL WORLD

Faith involves an affirmation of world. Though the person of faith finds his security in the resources of the faith encounter with God, this allows him to give himself to real life in the world as the stage of person. He does not say that earth has no place in the Christian framework. A denial of world in this sense would mean denial of responsibility as a man and a declaration of complete irrelevance of faith for life. The person of faith is also a person in a situation of reality.

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[54]Commission on Theology, "Jesus' Teaching and Society," Lutheran World, XV: 1 (1968), 48-52.

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Reality becomes true reality to the person of faith. He is able, in a fuller sense, to distinguish authentic possibility within this reality in the Kantian sense, purposeful possibility under God. Even the chaotic and the outrageous is seen in proper perspective.

All we do would be meaningless if faith would mean total fleeing from the world. The ideal would then be radical insensitivity to life, for life is living in reality. It is more than just endurance, a "Let's get it over with as soon as possible" attitude, which would be a mockery of what it means to be part of God's creation, a huge joke. Being open to God and finding life orientation in the faith relationship does not mean nihilism, or "dropping out", or just making the best of a bad situation.

"The Manichean error, "says Burtness, "is to say that man is absolutely evil. Its ethical result is the notion that the world is absurd, that it allows for no meaningful interpretation."[55] Rather, it is that the ultimacy of the place of person in reality, in relationships, is discovered only in relationship to Got. The communicator must avoid offense for the wrong reasons, especially where it is already difficult enough in the media to be authentically real.

Pinomaa has shown how Luther anchored his theology in

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[55]James Burtness, Whatever You Do (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1967), p. 66.

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reality. In his Bondage of the Will Luther makes the claim that "the God who is active in creation is the same God who comes to us in Christ." Pinomaa continues by saying that "Erasmus denied the omnipotence of God and his effective working in all things; he limited the area of God's activity to the inner life of the believers. According to Luther this makes faith unnecessary, and God the product of man's imagination."[56] Again Luther: "In the knowledge of Christ and God we must start where Christ himself started, from the 'mother's womb', from humanity."[57] Pinomaa concludes, "Christ lives in the Word and comes to us by means of the Word. But the Bible and "life" must not be set against each other, for the Bible was born in the midst of life. Biblical interpretation is interpretation of life and reality."[58]

Total spiritualisation of the Gospel is a denial of Incarnation when it denies the world. West concludes that "They are the most dangerous secularists, because they deny all relationship between God and his world."[59]

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[56]Pinomaa, op. cit., citing Luther, op. cit., XVIII, 712.

[57]Ibid., p. 5, citing Luther, op. cit., XL:1, 76 (1531).

[58]Ibid., p. 6.

[59]Charles West and David Paton, The Missionary Church in East and West (London: SCM Press, 1959), p. 99.

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Life is not faith, but faith gives the determinative dimension to it. The forgiven Christian's "permission to live" must not be violated, according to Burtness.[60]

How, then, does one communicate the truths of the Biblical statements such as the following: Jn. 18:36, "My kingdom is not of this world." Jn. 17:14, "they are not of the world." Mt. 10:39, " . . . he who loses his life for my sake will find it." Jn. 9:39, "For judgment came I into this world." Luke 12:49, "I came to cast fire upon the earth; and would that it were already kindled."

Statements such as these must be against the background of the words in John, "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly." The person of faith has a two-faceted relationship to the world. Where world is used largely as a religious concept in the recorded Gospels (or in Paul, such as his being "crucified to the world" (Gal. 6:14), life must not be oriented to "the world" without its proper reference to God. This would distort the person in the faith relationship to God and deny the person-fulfilling faith relationship to others which is opposite to the "love of the world" which is really a love of self for self's sake.

Skydsgaard gives proper perspective to the matter in his article, "Revolutionary Existence":

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[60]Burtness, op. cit., p. 102.

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> The Christ who comes is the one who makes all things new . . . .
>
> We must now go one step further. A genuine eschatological word is always at the same time a word relating to the present (it.), otherwise it is nothing . . . .
>
> The kingdom of God occurs there where the heavenly God encounters the earth, creating it anew by his grace and power . . . .
>
> The eschatological view grants to faith courage and joy to do the commonplace and that which lies at our doorstep even if it means difficulty and trouble.[61]

The person of faith discovers life in a real world, a life in depth, because it sees it in the perspective of the Gospel.

IV. PERSON LIBERATED BY FAITH

Faith, in the Reformation declaration, liberates the conscience and does not lay a burden upon it. In the same manner, where the element of anxiety and insecurity of person is stressed, "Faith means to be free of self-care. The gift of faith aims at giving man true freedom . . . . Man is . . . wholly himself when he is not caught up in himself, but has the real ground of his life outside himself."[62]

There appears at times a negative distortion of Christianity, as if it is basically restrictive in reference to life. Actually, in Tournier's words, "To depend on God

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[61] K. F. Skydsgaard, "Revolutionary Existence," Lutheran World, XV: 1 (1968), 41-43.

[62] Ebeling, The Nature of Faith, p. 115.

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is to be free of men, things and self. It is to be able to take pleasure in all his gifts, without being the slave of any."[63]

This liberation is coupled with responsibility. The person is liberated by faith for obedience in love. It is "faith working through love." (Gal. 5:6). "For freedom Christ has made us free." (Gal. 5:1). "For you were called to freedom, brethren, only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love be servants of one another." (Gal. 5:13).

The faith relationship is a liberating relationship. Man is free to develop his person creatively even as he is dependent on God.

This, then, is the person liberated by the faith relationship, living in a true freedom that is the fulfilment of his humanity.

V. PERSON FULFILLED BY THE FAITH RELATIONSHIP

Unlike a static relatedness, the faith relationship is one that has a dynamic which can be summed up in the fact that it fulfills person. Entering the faith relationship, although it involves radical re-orientation, is not taking person in the opposite direction of its original potential and created purpose.

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[63]Tournier, op. cit., p. 228.

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The concept of fulfilment is important for our study in that it brings the discussion beyond the idea of person simply in a new and unrelated state.

The concern of God in the faith encounter is that the faith relationship be a total concern of person so that, as Hick states, "the fulfilment of His purpose for our lives is also our own perfect self-fulfilment . . . . He desires . . . our uncoerced growth towards the humanity revealed in Christ."[64]

The radical character of the encounter is God's initiative in granting "new" life in the faith relationship and, on this base, leading on to fulfilment of person through being open to His resources. Acceptance by God into the fellowship of faith is what is meant by grace, as over against an evolutionary concept of person development. The faith relationship, then, is the continuing dynamic to fulfilment. Our study will show that the fulfilment is the wholeness experienced by the continued element of God's grace as over against the person's never measuring up, the Reformation concept of "simul iustus et peccator" (being at the same time both justified and sinner). From this all else flows. Without this all else would be meaningless.

One speaks of fulfilment (both in a framework of grace

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[64]John Hick, Faith and Knowledge (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1957), pp. 178-179.

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and as movement concerning the person) precisely because of the finitude of person. In a recent symposium edited by Haselden, the editor gives focus to the presentations with the thesis that "man, being finite, can never achieve complete integrity; his being is never entirely stable and unassailable. Nevertheless, personhood--as other ages proved--is a possibility, and we must seek it."[65]

A failure to recognize the relation of finitude to the infinite brings despair in the Kierkegaardian sense: "Existence is a synthesis of the infinite and the finite."[66] Without the wholeness supplied by the faith relationship, the spirit continues in what Kierkegaard describes as a dynamic insecurity.

Jaspers' reference to finitude is referred to by Tillich as "our historical relativity, death, suffering, struggle, guilt . . . ." When the person "tries . . . in the process of becoming to transcend the measure of its finitude, the finite being . . . is finally ruined."[67] Philosophy helps define the drives to fulfilment latent in the person

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[65]Kyle Haselden, Are You Nobody? (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1967), p. 9.

[66]Soren Kierkegaard, Concluding Unscientific Postscript (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1941), p. 112. See Tillich's discussion of finitude, op. cit., pp. 96-98.

[67]Cited by Tillich, ibid., p. 97.

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even though not necessarily leading to ways to fulfilment. Jaspers, although he states the inability of the self to transcend, defines existence as "urge, drive, desire, the search for happiness, the experience of fleeting perfection and mortal agony. It lies in the restless struggle for self-preservation and aggrandizement . . . ."[68]

Fulfilment through the faith encounter is not equated with mental health, though it should contribute to the same. The person is always limited, always in sin, and the fulfilment through faith involves a security on a base not dependent ultimately on outward personality wholeness as contributory to the basis of faith. This is the unique element in fulfilment through faith. This is what it means to be a Christian, to believe that the person stands in wholeness before God in spite of its observable flaws.

Fulfilment of person through faith means that, no matter what, the integrity of the person is kept before God. To "deny one's self" does not mean that the person is less an "I", that person is negated and stifled. Self-centeredness and the autonomy of the self against God is denied, the sinful self is denied, but that which God created for essential fellowship with him, namely, the person, is not done away with. On the contrary, it is brought to wholeness, to "mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fulness

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[68]Karl Jaspers, op. cit., p. 63.

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of Christ." (Ephesians 4:13).

Faith as Total Concern of Person

The above lays the premise for this definitive statement. It is the total reality of person that is concerned. When God calls to man as a total concern, it is, as Ebeling views it, that "the message does not seek to be realized by man but man is to be realized by the message. Our reality is to be illumined by the message."[69]

Faith as total concern of man is in opposition to the view of man as a thing, an object to be diagnosed and fragmented. It is "meaning" for man as a totality that is important. The total person finds its true (and transcendent) meaning when the faith encounter places person "in Christ", in the Biblical concept. True communication of faith brings person into this total relationship, a total dependence upon God that is discovery of the total person also in life relationships. It is discovered in surrender to Christ as the Crucified who gave his person totally for us. This is the essence of Christianity.

The discovery of total person is the opposite to the loneliness that plagues the self, a loneliness not escaped by a fragmented dialogue of person. Day defines the dialogue with self as lonely self. He cites Wolfe's statement in

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[69]Ebeling, Word and Faith, p. 198.

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"God's Lonely Man": "The essence of human tragedy is in loneliness."[70] But Day goes on to picture loneliness as "God's invitation to enter into fellowship with Him . . . , a need deeper than is the need we feel for human fellowship."[71] Day appeals to Heim as claiming that the "I-Thou relationship is independent of space and time . . . . So Jesus becomes our contemporary and the direct personal relation to Him is the very essence of Christianity."[72]

There can be no relationship, of course, outside of person--no I-Thou existence. It is total relationship, a total concern.

Fulfilment through Forgiveness

The discussion of faith in the frame of reference of person properly terminates in the summary concept of fulfilment of person, and fulfilment finds its definitive focus (as intimated by the above) in the forgiveness of sin.

Luther, in his wholesome concept of life, finds the matrix of all of his theology in the forgiveness of sins. In his Commentary on the Psalms, 1532-33, Luther states:

Where there is no forgiveness there is no God; where

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[70]Thomas Wolfe, The Seas of God (New York: Lippincott, 1944). Cited in Day, op. cit., p. 75.

[71]Ibid., p. 76.

[72]Karl Heim, Jesus der Herr (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948). p. 37. Cited by Day, op. cit., p. 151.

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> there is no God there is no forgiveness. And where there is no forgiveness there is no fear or worship of God, but only idolatry and work-righteousness.[73]

The relationship to God, initiated and sustained by the Gospel of forgiveness, gives form to fulfilment in life relationship, not the other way around. The existential search for wholeness, for what it means to be a human being, finds its ultimate in the Biblical concept of righteousness as expressed in the fourth Beatitude: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." (Matt. 5:6). Combining the insights of psychology with the concept of righteousness in the faith relationship described, Cramer graphically describes fulfilment:

> When he possesses this righteousness, he can be assured of his adequacy with God, man, and himself. In fact, Jesus' psychology explains that this kind of understanding satisfies man's deepest needs. In other words, righteousness in the fullest sense of the word fulfills the goal for which man was created. This is life's ultimate. Experiencing this righteousness he becomes a person who can move about with a sense of ease within himself and in the world.[74]

The corollary to the "offense" of the Gospel is recognition that the Gospel is basically fulfilment of latent need, not destroying person, but fulfilling. Guilt also is

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[73]Luther, op. cit., XL:3,359, cited by George Forell, Faith Active in Love (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1959), pp. 62-65.

[74]Raymond L. Cramer, The Psychology of Jesus and Mental Health (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1959), p. 113.

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an offense to person. The Gospel is need fulfilment. Fulfilment through forgiveness puts man into wholesome relatedness to all of life and to the world. Through the Gospel of grace all things become new, and for the person there is a new schale of values and a new order opening up all the possibilities for fulfilment.

The person is released by love and for love. Forgiveness creates fellowship. The Gospel is the supreme embodiment of God as love. Allport states in his book, The Individual and his Religion, "Love, incomparably the great psychotherapeutic agent, is something that professional psychiatry cannot of itself create, focus nor release."[75]

Love, and the capacity for it, is central to person and to personality. That is why it is central to any process of communication. The radio-television communicator must be especially on guard in this respect. "The power of communication," says Jaspers, "originates in love."[76] Bachmann reminds the media-communicators that "genuine communication between persons requires finding something held in common to serve as a bridge. There must be a reaching out in love for

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[75]Gordon Allport, The Individual and His Religion (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), p. 80. Cited by Cramer, op. cit., p. 230.

[76]Karl Jaspers, Reason and Anti-Reason in Our Time (London: SCM Press, 1952), p. 44.

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a relationship that will give meaning to words . . . ."[77]

Love mediated personally is communication. Barth contended, in spite of a dim view of creating a context for effective communication, that no man can really become a Christian unless another man mediates God's love to him.

Love in a humanistic sense, that does not find its anchor in the reality of faith or in the framework of forgiveness, is distorted and limited in its reference, just as person is. The fulfilment of the ability to love derives from fulfilment of person liberated from its own limitations and self-accusing bondage in respect to its own falling short concerning love. It is able to see beyond the distortion in human existence and both face it and react to it within the framework of God's love in the dynamic faith relationship.

Teilhard de Chardin speaks much of disintegration in the universe, in life, that is balanced by the stronger radial energy seeking union and manifesting itself as love. In the Incarnation there is union with God and all his creation. "This," explains Towers, in his exposition of Teilhard de Chardin's thought, "makes sense of both science and religion."[78]

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[77]John Bachmann, The Church in the World of Radio-Television (New York: Association Press, 1960), p. 110.

[78]Bernard Towers, Teilhard de Chardin (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1966), pp. 32-34. See Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, The Divine Milieu (New York: Harper & Row, 1965).

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Love is the working out of faith. The fragmented person has a fragmented love. God's offer of forgiveness is love that fulfills person. In the framework of such love the person fulfills the law, fulfills the requirements of healthy life relationship just as the call of the person to the faith relationship was on the same basis, in the event of Christ as the substance of the kerygma, the proclamation of grace to the person.

This is the great promise of fulfilment. This is why the communication itself, as word event, is promise. "The Gospel," writes Paul, "is the power of God for salvation." (Rom. 1:17). The Gospel itself is this great happening. The "offense" of the Gospel to the self-directed man should not be matched by its offense to the communicator who cannot fully trust the dynamic of the proclamation of forgiveness and grace as power to communicate in the deepest sense. It is not a recitation of word formulas detached from life, but it is invitation to person in the context of personal existence to find fulfilment in the faith relationship which, ultimately, has its subsistence in the perspective of grace.

As these categories of person show, faith is related to life style as an expression of person. The fulfilled person is a person of faith, as evidenced in the primary encounter and relationship with the God of our being who frees us for open and authentic relationships through the Gospel of forgiveness and grace and calls to the larger

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commitments and devotion to Him that are seen in our commitment to others.

To summarize, person is the stage for the understanding of communication. Faith is the stage for the understanding of person, the person that comes to fulfilment in dialogue and relationship, authentically addressed in the I-Thou encounter with God, finding definition in communication through language as the basic dynamic expression of consciousness, yet more than expression alone, living outwardly in interpersonal encounter in a real world, liberated and fulfilled by the faith relationship that lives on the dynamic of forgiveness and grace.

The integrity of both message and media are at stake. To keep the integrity of the message does not mean a lessening of the integrity of person. Communication of the message leads past the "offense" of the Gospel to a fulfilment of latent need of person, the questions of which the Gospel and the faith relationship itself poses and satisfies.

There is always an element of some ambiguity in the question of arrival at total fulfilment for the goal of humanity, but, even this is satisfied by the faith relationship which, finally, is fulfilment through partaking of the reality that is beyond the time dimension and being freed for life in its fullest dimensions. These theological elements cannot be separated from the communication process itself. It will be our task in the final two chapters to

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measure them against the particular structures of radio-television and to make an attempted prognosis for a truthful and authentic approach to the media.

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CHAPTER IV

THE STRUCTURES OF RADIO/TELEVISION IN THE FRAME OF REFERENCE OF PERSON

An ill-defined concept of person makes theology uncomfortable before the media which, at first glance, seem not to lend their nature to the more usual methodological approaches. There is a considerable amount of healthy uneasiness about the "unknown" as communication of faith leaves its past explorable boundaries.

This chapter has as its intention the examination of the radio-television media in order to allow the theologian and communicator to have the tools with which to take measure of his understandings of person in the faith relationship as over against the framework of person in the media. Keeping in mind the integration of faith with person as categorized in former chapters, the following seeks to use somewhat similar categories in attempting to understand the involvement of person in the media.

A foundation is first laid in a summary of person in a basic communication process with a cursory view of the dynamics of human behaviour which color all communications. Findings concerning the complex involvement of person in radio-television will lead to an investigation of what happens to word in the media with particular importance to later prognosis concerning the word concerning faith. This involves an examination of how word might be filtered, the

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way it is perceived, and the way it may be affected as personal word and persuasive word. With this awareness, the section concludes with an assessment of what kind of personal change might be expected because of radio-television communication. Here it will be particularly important to appeal to authorities and seasoned media investigators to get as definitive answers as possible in preparation for our assessment in the final chapter with its combining of the concerns of message and media.

It is not the place for amateur philosophizing or conjecture, a practice that considerably blurs the entire picture. As the prognosis for communication through the media can not be based on an undefined relationship of faith to person, neither can it ignore the solidly real, human, and earthy factors of person in the media. To misjudge these mutual concerns is to leave a cloud over the entire process, whether it be of wishful thinking or of bold or hesitant confusion. The first axiom in our study is stated by Schramm, "It is contrary to all our experience to doubt the ability of communication to have an effect."[1] Problems and differences arise when we move to complicated communication structures.

One cannot be too dogmatic, yet responsible evaluation

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[1]Wilbur Schramm, Responsibility in Mass Communication (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957), p. 49.

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must be made. "In truth," Schramm continues, "there is little doubt of the effect of face-to-face interpersonal communication. But it is necessary to record there are real differences of opinion concerning the effects of mass communication."[2] To illustrate this fact, Schramm quotes two people, namely, John F. Kennedy (when he was Senator from Massachusetts), and Professor Richard T. LaPiere. The former writes in Profiles of Courage about the massive power of mass communications to shape directions of politics,[3] whereas the latter, writing in his book, A Theory of Social Control about the supposition that the mass media have a serious effect on conduct of people, concludes that "the conduct of men cannot be determined by anything analagous to mass production means."[4]

Of primary interest is the overall verification of the fact that mass communication is intrinsically social. It is part of the total shifting of character of the entire social matrix, the change from face-to-face type of communication to complications of structure. The more complicated is the

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[2] Ibid.

[3] John F. Kennedy, Profiles of Courage (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), p. 18. Cited by Schramm, op. cit., p. 50.

[4] Richard T. LaPiere, A Theory of Social Control (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1954), pp. 518-522. Cited by Schramm, op. cit., p. 50.

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structure, the more the "tendency to muddle the reflection of reality as conveyed by the mass media with reality itself . . . ."[5]

It is a fact of radio-television that much of "religious" communication in general has a tendency toward reaching those already convinced of the message. The problem is to study to see if this is something inherent in the nature of the media or is also an axiom in religious communication in general, or, possibly, a result of naivete in communication.

First of all, a knowledge of some basics of communication must be brought even to the complicated supra-personal networks such as radio-television.

I. A PRELIMINARY UNDERSTANDING OF PERSON IN A SIMPLE COMMUNICATION PROCESS

The phenomenon of person itself is tied up with communication. We have shown, in discussing the faith relationship, that the person exists in dialogue and fulfills itself in relationship as over against privatization. Communication is not just a surface affair, an exchange of objective words where sender and receiver are not in the I-thou relationship. Brightman stresses the following:

Personality is social . . . . It means only that

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[5]Olov Hartman, "The Mass Media--Man's Power and Subjection," The Christian Broadcaster, XII: 4 (December 1965), 6.

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> persons communicate with each other . . . . True communication . . . is a sharing of thought and purpose and feeling between persons . . . . It does mean that one can be aware of what another means, what he purposes, what he feels, and commit himself to like meaning, purposes, and feelings.[6]

We are really conscious, as Jaspers said, of the things that we mean. To speak of communication means to speak of things really coming out of and becoming an integral part of the structure of person, assimilated into one's entire frame of reference and becoming part of one's existence in reality. It is constant movement and dialogue that involves development as over against the notion of communication as something going on objectively outside of the self.

The self-involving process of communication really continues on different levels at the same time. Probably one begins with his own intra-personal network where the person carries on dialogue with one's self. Then, there is movement towards "the other" in simple face-to-face communication between two people. Above this are the less easily structured networks that might involve one person speaking face-to-face to a group with more or less opportunity for dialogue and relationship. Beyond this are the structures (as seen in the mass media, for instance) where one person speaks to an unidentifiable "mass" which is quite anonymous.

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[6]Edgar Brightman (ed.), Personalism and Theology (Bos ton: Boston University Press, 1943), p. 60.

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Where the speaker or his organization is also anonymous the situation is complicated. These become what the communicator categorizes as supra-personal networks, although person is involved.

Greater anonymity appears with each complication. The more complicated the networks, the more insecurity there is in the process.[7]

An examination of what are the basic elements in the communication process will show how critical the move from one level of communication to another becomes. It is within this type of understanding that one is able to judge the critical elements in the communication of the concerns of faith through radio-television.

The Communication Process

A social situation is necessary for communication. It must be in a social context. The simplest network of face-to-face communication involving only two people would involve (as all communication does) a sender (or, source), a message, a medium, and a receiver.

When communication is in a social context it involves authentic person in dialogue, as former chapters have stated.

Each person brings his own structure of person to this

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[7]For one of the best discussions of communications networks and their implications, see Jurgen Ruesch and Gregory Bateson, Communication: The Social Matrix of Psychiatry (New York: Norton, 1951).

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process. The process is not complete unless there is attention given to the sender and the message by the receiver. He perceives the message and the fact of its being sent, and there is a resulting perception of the perception by the sender. The sender determines much of his actual coloring of his role by the latter.

The reception of the message depends on the mutual understanding of symbols. The sender encodes his message, puts it into mutually identifiable symbols. The receiver decodes the message as sender and receiver bring to the process all of their former understandings and meanings given to the symbols used. The two come to mutual understanding of the symbols and evaluate the other's conception of them in the process. In this way also they mutually assign roles in the process to enable the receiver to guage the meaning.

Words are symbols. Probably no word means exactly the same thing to different people. Our own experience is brought to the symbols to give our meaning to them. This is our frame of reference.[8]

Communication is possible, because, even in diversity

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[8]Wilbur Schramm, The Science of Human Communication (New York: Basic Books, 1963), p. 7.

For an excellent annotated bibliography on this subject, including various areas concerning the mass media, see list in Wilbur Schramm, Mass Communication (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1960), pp. 669-678. See also Joseph Klapper, The Effects of Mass Communication (Glencoe: Free Press, 1960), pp. 258-74.

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of culture and situation, the process of finding meanings is very much the same, as Osgood has researched.[9]

Besides this important factor (of greatest importance for the user of the mass media), two other elements are pointed out by Nida: "All peoples have a common range of human experience, and all peoples possess the capacity for at least some adjustment to the symbolic 'grids' of others."[10]

The acceptance of the message depends, then, on decision to give selective attention (selection) with subsequent acceptance or rejection by the cognitive reference. The first big problem is that of selection. Each person has his own world of cognitive resources to bring to the process. Though intricately related in a social web, he finally makes decision as to whether the message involved will become a part of his stored information, and whether or not it will have an effective change in his behaviour or attitude.

Even in a simple process, complicated elements enter in. Part of this will be seen in our examination of the dynamics of human behaviour. There are many elements of censorship, conscious or unconscious, that influence the decision concerning the message, whether these are internally

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[9]Charles E. Osgood, "An Exploration Into Semantic Space," in Schramm, The Science of Human Communication, pp. 28-40.

[10]Eugene A. Nida, Message and Mission (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948), p. 90.

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built up or refer to group norms and beliefs. These elements reflect themselves in the giving of meanings to the symbols (or, signs). Complications enter through the presence of both surface and latent meanings of signs. Also, beneath the simple "dictionary meaning" commonly understood (speaking relatively), there are connotative, or emotional and evaluative meanings concerning various traits of the sign in question. All these are part of what we see as the "word" in the message.

The receiver also, in the process of perception, takes note of many elements besides the mere words, such as intonations, gestures, expressions. His evaluation of the sender also plays an important role.

Man is a feeling being with a wide range of responses from that of plain sensation (from stimulus) to percept (an organized sensation which recognizes the elements involved) and to concept (ideas and universals).

A basic element for our study is the fact that in the communication process man is seeking relevant information. Beyond this, he is seeking for and selecting that which he considers beneficial, depending on the frame of reference he brings and the value systems he has built up. These become his actual preferred channels of communication.

The entire problem of relatedness of entities enters in here, including relatedness of persons.

Responses to communication of messages may reflect a

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complex set of circumstances as over against the notion of a simple acceptance or rejection based on logical cognitive thinking. The Christian communicator cannot overlook this fact of person, especially when approaching the media. The complications are increased when one moves from communication simply affecting immediate behaviour to a message that would concern a person's entire value system. In this latter, the receiver looks for stronger identification with the sender (certainly the case in the communication of the concerns of faith).

Nida speaks of this deeper level thus:

> In addition to identification with his message, the source must also demonstrate an identification with the receptor; for the receptor must be convinced that the source understands his, the receptor's, particular background and has respect for his views, even though he may not agree with them.[11]

The Framework of Dynamics of Human Behaviour

The above all points to the fact that man exists in a field in relation to which he structures his behaviour and shapes his attitudes through decision or adjustment. The elements here will indicate the pattern communication must take in order to surmount its many obstacles.

The individual is not a static phenomenon but is goal-oriented in one way or another. In facing reality and trying to come to terms with it, the person cognitively structures

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[11] Ibid., p. 165.

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the situation. Fearing indicates how personality factors color responses. From his studies we can make the following observations:[12] In facing his environment the individual is busy trying to identify what he considers both friendly and unfriendly forces. He attempts to fit reality into a structure. There is always an element of tension in this exercise because he cannot come to a state of absolute stability and he is forced always, in this somewhat precarious balance, to try to reduce these tensions. In interaction with the other person in communication there is a necessity for the individual to calculate what he believes are the motives, attitudes, reactions, interests of the other person, not only as we respond to him but in our calculation of how he will respond to us. This determines the way we receive a message and the way we form it. We often, therefore, unconsciously shape our message in some fashion based on our knowledge of our audience. A message is conceived in a setting of relationship. The person is basically concerned with sustaining his position in the social fabric.

Because of our value and perceptual systems, we are, in a sense, pre-sensitized to certain stimulii in communication. What results is a fundamental controlling element in

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[12]Franklin Fearing, "Human Communication," in Lewis Dexter and David White (eds.), People, Society and Mass Communications (Glencoe: Free Press, 1964), pp. 37-67.

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the carrying out of the communication process, and it will be significant to apply this to our descriptions of the more anonymous and complicated networks. There is perceptual resonance if the stimulii or the new information are congruent with our value systems. On the contrary, if not so, there is a situation of perceptual defense. The person needs this congruence with reality to function as a whole person. We are actually always busy creating our environment. This is why any distortion of person is a tragic thing in its ultimate effect. Each one is creating his own world and relating everything to it. When one's world is not built up in a healthy fashion (where distorted elements of communication enter in contrary to reality) the person can set up extreme compensatory action if his structuring mechanisms fail him and various abnormal forms of person's relatedness to the world result.

Rosenberg likewise speaks of his structural theory of attitude dynamics in the same vein.[13] He deals with the problems of communication when the person has conflict between cognitive and emotional components of an attitude. When beliefs seem contrary to feelings, people seek congruence.

Festinger speaks similarly of "cognitive dissonance."

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[13]Milton J. Rosenberg, "The New Scientific Rhetoric," in Schramm, The Science of Human Communication, p. 50

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This, he claims, is the situation when there is conflict between what a person knows and how he acts. A person tries to handle the dissonance either by changing his actions or by changing his beliefs. This sometimes leads to a person seeking social support for some new opinion he would like to accept.[14] Again we can see the implications for media communication that is really very social.

An axiom that refers to all of the above is that where deeply held values are involved, with an emotional content, the person resists change very strongly, no matter what the communication network. The mass media must find special ways to handle this problem in the most authentic way, knowing that, as Schramm says about the receiver, "he will often reject or ignore messages that challenge his firm attitudinal structure, or will distort them so that they seem to agree with him."[15] All of this contributes to the process of selection in communication--selective memory, selective attention, and selective retention of what one hears.

Even the simplest communication process is seen to have a complicated pattern of interacting factors. It deals with being a person, keeping its integrity, and structuring reality.

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[14] Ibid., pp. 17-27.

[15] Schramm, Responsibility in Mass Communication, pp. 56-57.

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II. RADIO/TELEVISION AS A COMPLEX INVOLVEMENT OF PERSON

As over against the earlier concept of an atomized audience in radio-television, a major discovery has been that of a very complex phenomenon of inter-relatedness in ways never suspected. Of course, the earliest simplistic view was of one homogeneous mass receiving the message in a fairly uniform way. This was also a concept of a simple network. In fact, because of gross expectations of the mechanism involved, it seemed to offer a simpler and more predictable communication than any other form.

When this misconception was discovered, it was a great advance to conceive of the sender speaking to each person individually and each person reacting in his own circumscribed reality of self. Studies have shown this not to be the real truth. Deeper understandings, even, of the simple communication networks have intimated more complicated involvement of the individual. All of the scientific research of recent years has pointed definitely to the complex interplay of interpersonal factors even in the so-called anonymity of the mass media.

The Social Matrix as a Determinant

Radio-television communication heightens the truth that communication is social. More than ever the group norms and beliefs play a part along with other expectations deriving from culture, race, and origin.

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In one of the first experiments in research concerning the television-radio audience and religion by Parker, Barry and Smythe in New Haven in 1955, the results showed the following:

> Mass communication takes place in a social matrix which is a dynamic composite of religion, national origin, culture and social class. The position of the listener in this matrix will strongly influence his attitude toward a communicator and the interpretation he gives to the content of a message on radio. This conclusion would seem to be particularly true about religious mass communications, which deal so specifically with values.[16]

The effects of mass communication are joined to the influences of not only personality resources but group relationships as well.

In saying all of this we must also inject the truth that the receiver is paradoxically not just reacting in a completely predetermined way. It is a complex matrix with many unpredictables. Studies carried out at Columbia University under the leadership of Lazarsfeld and Menzel had supported this fact. "Effects depend on a complex network of specialized personal and social influences," they claim.[17] Because of many complicated needs for successful communication, several different channels of communication were

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[16]Everett C. Parker, et. al., The Television-Radio Audience and Religion (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955), p. 395.

[17]Paul Lazarsfeld and Herbert Menzel, "Mass Media and Personal Influence," in Schramm, The Science of Human Communication, pp. 94-113.

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involved in influencing the receivers. This was borne out in studies in American farming communities where one channel called their attention to the choice, others convinced them that it was all right to accept the new opinion or attitude, others began the action by showing how something would be accomplished. Different channels were associated with different phases. The studies show how indispensable are the informal and accidental means of communication.

The important fact to recognize is that the mass-media communication process rivals the complexity of the social matrix.

The Multi-step Nature of Radio/Television Communication

The names of Elihu Katz of the University of Chicago and Paul Lazarsfeld of Columbia have been particularly associated with studies and theses concerning the two-step flow of mass communication, or, the multi-step nature of the process.

This is a further definition of the complexities of the structure. No single discovery is of greater importance to the radio-television communicator.[18]

Findings were first reported in studies led by Lazarsfeld (together with Berelson and Gaudet at the time of

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[18]See Paul Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson and Hazel Gaudet, The People's Choice (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948) describing early research.

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the presidential campaigns in the 1940's). They were interested in the decision-making process and combined communications research with decision-making research. An unexpected discovery was to see the important role played by "opinion leaders", influential leaders in different social groups and in different areas of interest. Katz and Lazarsfeld summarize:

> The leaders reported . . . that, for them, the mass media were influential . . . .
>
> The suggestion basically was this: that ideas, often seem to flow from (it.) radio and print to (it.) opinion leaders and from them (it.) to the less active sections of the population.[19]

They speak of the rediscovery of what they call the "primary group", and that "all interpersonal relations are potential networks of communication and that an opinion leader can best be thought of as a group member playing a key communication role."[20]

Patterns of interpersonal communication in this process, they claim, are affected in various ways by (1) group structures (it.) (2) group "cultures" or, climates (it.) (3) group situations (it.).[21]

To study this kind of interpersonal influence, it is

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[19]Elihu Katz and Paul Lazarsfeld, Personal Influence (Glencoe: Free Press, 1955), p. 32.

[20]Ibid., p. 33.

[21]Ibid., p. 84.

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necessary to have individuals who are close enough together in such a relationship as described. This has proven effective with studies in tracing decision back through a person-to-person network showing an interesting pattern of diffusion, especially in a study as to how a new drug was adopted by all the doctors in one area. Here there were really several steps in the process of acceptance, all based on referral with associates and innovators who were the kind to keep in touch with outside sources as well.[22] It is also evident that the time element is a variable with the doing away with the idea of an immediate response to a stimulus. This is one of the most significant aspects for the radio-television communicator to note. The entire process is really a combination of mass and face-to-face communication.

The communicator should find ways to identify types of opinion leaders. The studies show them to be people who have interest, have positions showing competence in the matter, are accessible and gregarious and have contact with relevant outside information. They moved into face-to-face communication and were more likely to reach the undecided, could introduce the topic casually as something marginal as over against the mass media where there is awareness of their purposefulness. The issues could also be made immediately relevant to the listener who was aware that reward of

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[22]See Lazarsfeld and Menzel, op. cit.

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approval was immediate and personal. The multi-step flow was spoken of as (1) from the media (2) through several relays of opinion leaders (3) who communicate with one another (4) and to the ultimate followers.

People depend heavily on personal advice. Relationship to groups determines much of the acceptance of messages and their impact. Allied propaganda, in World War II, became effective only after the Nazi primary groups were dispersed. The Korean War showed the same characteristic when the North Koreans accepted propaganda when severed from groups. The latter was discovered in a study by Klapper, director of social research for CBS.[23]

Mass communication under conditions of cultural change and group flexibilities in a fluid situation will generally give a more important role to the opinion leaders.

Lerner identifies people more susceptible to change in a developing society as "mobile personalities". They have high capacity of identification with change, and an ability to adjust to the new demands. This type of person, also, is precisely the one who is the radio listener, the active voter and cash customer, accepting and advocating change. In Lerner's studies concerning national development (he worked under UNESCO in different studies) he recognized the importance of the development of the "mobile" personality. The

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[23] Ibid.

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mass media, says Lerner, are "mobility multipliers". This suggests an opposing truth as over against the notion of the media as contributing only to standardization and passivity, a very important element for the religious communicator to remember.

Lerner's findings coincide and develop those mentioned previously in a summary concept of a nucleus of mobile personalities susceptible to change together with the power of the media to disseminate ideas and attitudes of mobility and change. His scientific approach to the phenomenon of change in the media result in some of the most promising possibilities and directions for communication.[24]

III. WHAT HAPPENS TO WORD IN RADIO/TELEVISION

Not only is radio-television a complex involvement of person in the social matrix with its element of multi-step communication, but the absence of face-to-face actual presence and, in the case of radio, of visibility leads to an examination of what happens to word itself in the process. How much is the process of identification of source, of roles, of symbols, of receiver tied to actual personal presence? How is it, in a sense, filtered? Or, is word always

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[24]His work is cited in several UNESCO reports. See Daniel Lerner, The Passing of Traditional Society (Glencoe: Free Press, 1958). See references in Wilbur Schramm, Mass Media and National Development (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964), pp. 46-47.

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word independent of different physical situations? How is the process of perception affected? How is word affected, then, in its being "personal" word, which is true word?

In Its Being Filtered

Message through word was shown to be a complicated thing because of various levels of meanings of words, of surface and latent meanings, of many parallel messages that come from gesture, presence, manner, voice quality and the like.

"The use of the microphone," claims Schultz, "imposes a complicated filtering process. Through the interpolation of many technical devices, the form of address becomes less and less direct . . . ."[25] Schultz describes the voice (coming in a distorted form) as only one part of the speaker. The techniques also open up new possibilities for the voice, however.

If word is the embodiment of consciousness and the medium for definitive and authentic interpersonal dialogue, how is relatedness of person through word affected by personal presence in a different form such as in the media?

Truth and understanding seek definition through interpersonal reference. Studies have shown us that this is not by any means limited to the first dialogic encounter but

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[25]Hans Jurgen Schultz, The Secular Character of the Mass Media and Their Use By The Church (Geneva: World Council of Churches), p. 4 (Mimeographed.)

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but branches out in complicated fashion no matter what the communication situation. It is probably wrong to limit effective word in too narrow a manner. When Sartre writes, "I cannot know myself except through the intermediary of another person,"[26] this does not exclude a more complicated chain of "word event" beyond that of a single proscribed confrontation. The problem is to make word authentic in the sense that the "other" is not treated as an object and the spoken word itself doesn't become a thing. The New Hermeneutic would tend toward the emphasis that word has its own dynamic when it is authentic word. The dynamic of word should not be essentially affected by other variables arising out of varying physical situations in the communication networks.

Word is, in a sense, filtered in a special way in radio-television communication. But word is always filtered in the way we have described the communication process. On the other hand, word has an element of constancy in itself when it is authentic word.

In Its Perception

As our study of perception in simple face-to-face communication showed, many factors beyond the simple cogni-

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[26]Jean Paul Sartre, L'Etre et le Neant (Paris: N.R.F., 1943). Cited by Paul Tournier, The Meaning of Persons (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962), p. 130.

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tive one enter in. To understand that perception is stimulated by mutual recognition of personality, by the assigning of roles, by giving selective attention that is based on a complex network of personal dynamics, is to recognize that some of these factors are changed in the media, especially in radio with the lack of visibility. It indicates that the media communicator must seek to stress those elements that remain and even capitalize on new possibilities to bring about perception.

The great capacity of the receiver for vivid pictorialization and the imaginative filling out of the total framework must be remembered. Out of the potential of the media to have a singular type of intense "personality", the individual has great substitute powers of filling in the process when the core message is authentically presented as a reaching out for this kind of dialogue, when it finds its own ways of making the gesture toward the "other".

In any case, the matter of changed perception is a critical problem for our study and a limiting factor for the media communicator. Our intention is to indicate that it, by no means, rules out possibilities of authentic communication either from a theological or a social viewpoint. The best studies of effects of mass communication substantiate this. It must, however, be a deterrent for a naive approach to the media. Its obvious implications make all the more amazing the approaches that totally ignore these facts.

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Growing up in the age of the media may very well lead to intensification of compensatory types of perception. MacLuhan speaks often of the "electronic man" and his developing capacity for participation in the process going on, feeling the compelling demand of the operation for him to give himself to it in a different way. Here are potentials both good and bad and a reminder to the Christian communicator to give attention to the ethical aspects of the setting up of a social situation for his communication purposes. Love must be the determinative element. To use Tournier's terms, the communication must be aimed towards and satisfy the "person" as over against the "personage" only.

In Its Being Personal Word

How, then, can media word be personal word? DeWire reminds that "without the interposing of something that is truly ourselves upon the event we become a nonentity, an unclear voice."[27] No matter what the communication context "it is necessary to put a loving act at the very beginning of our relationship with other people . . . . The other one . . . sees we are relaxed and not poised to oppose him."[28]

The person, we discovered, is that which is addressed. The listener, in the context of the media, must

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[27]Harry A. DeWire, The Christian As Communicator (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), p. 81.

[28]Ibid., p. 72.

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ask if it is really I that am addressed.

At an Art and Communications seminar in Hong Kong, John Garrett made this challenge:

> The electronic revolution has made possible intimate personal conversation with millions at a time. One man speaks quietly, authentically, to one other man, woman or child. Many theologians declare that the mass media are impersonal. They, in reality, are inescapably personal, . . ."[29]

Mendelsohn, in a 1961 study of radio listening in the New York-New Jersey area, found how very personalized, in a sense, the media can become. In fact, the radio took on the very personification of a companion that played an important role in the daily life of the listener, a presence that was stimulating in many ways. The radio effected changes of mood. Mendelsohn referred to the "social lubricating function" of radio.[30]

In this sense, at least, the media are helping to shape a "new" kind of communicating man. Boyd, in considering the "personal" aspect of the media, concluded:

> We cannot approach the media of mass communication as if physical communication did not exist . . . . Mass Communication, while not being "individual", may seem to be "personal" in a most compelling way. This it does by speaking to the universal human situation of finitude

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[29]John Garrett, "The Church's Communication of the Gospel In The Modern World," The Christian Broadcaster, XII: 4 (December 1965), 34.

[30]Harold Mendelsohn, "Listening To Radio," in Dexter and White, op. cit., pp. 239-49.

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and estrangement.[31]

This would seem to indicate the possibility that the media can be personal and influence attitude and opinion outside of the usually circumscribed individualistic personal relationship. There is much to be learned here. To appeal to the more universal human situation does have the element of person where need recognition takes place. Considering the nature of the media, this is of major importance. The listener may be invited to make his own personal discoveries.

Using too stereotyped thinking concerning communication is liable to make us too suspicious of the media--to judge them, in fact, to be impersonal from various standard reasons that might be given. The author considers it more realistic to consider the variables and limitations in all types of communication, along with the limitations in man. Many stereotyped views of the depersonalizing forces of the media are being proven unfounded. Van den Heuvel's appraisal seems to be timely:

> Each of the media has its own genius and requires its own skills. To say that the mass media are less able to establish communication than face-to-face conversation is simply not true; they establish their <u>own</u> (it.) type of communication and enrich the possibilities . . . .
>
> The media have no more inherent evil possibilities than any other thing that man has invented . . . . Generations before us had the same fear of psychiatry, of democracy, of astronomy, of automobiles, aeroplanes,

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[31]Malcolm Boyd, <u>Crisis in Communication</u> (Garden City: Doubleday, 1957), p. 111.

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injections and republics.[32]

Limiting factors, however, do center in the matter of what happens to word in radio-television. Although it is, in a sense, filtered because of the changed situation, and, although the phenomenon of perception is somewhat changed according to our old categories, although the nature of the social context and personal element is a different one, there are elements that indicate it is false to write off the media as too radically different from what is assumed to be effective face-to-face communication.

In the creation of new atmospheres of social context and modes of perception, in the appeal to the complexities of the network established, in the recognition of group and universal relevance to recognized elements of the human situation, and in the new possibilities that each new type of media open up for man, the communicator need not despair in his communication of word. Aware of certain limitations, he will learn to capitalize on real potential and have a measure of faith in the inherent dynamic of word in the context of radio-television as a new type of compelling presence, a new kind of voice. He is faced, as he is in any communication, with a new kind of challenge to make the word authentic word.

This study aims to focus on the central goal of

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[32]Albert Van den Heuvel, "A Meditation About Theology, Communication and the Mass Media," The Christian Broadcaster, IX; 2 (August 1967), 8.

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communication--to bring about reorientation of attitude or opinion. After measuring factors in the simplest communication process against the media, it is important to evaluate possibilities of change.

IV. RADIO/TELEVISION AND PERSONAL CHANGE

The word "change" has a wide spectrum of connotations. It may only mean a shifting in intensity of an attitude or opinion, or it could involve radical reversal of opinion. The measuring of change is a relative matter. The setting of a norm can be quite arbitrary. Nevertheless, for our study of the communication of the concerns of faith by radio-television, it is necessary to come to some conclusions in the present chapter regarding the relationship of the media to elements of change in the audience. It is of equal importance for the communicator to set in his own mind what his definitions and goals in the matter of change really consist of so that he can both focus his efforts correctly in the presentation of his message and measure correctly what he seeks as effects.

One natural tendency is to look suddenly for some special kind of change effected by the media just because it is a new situation in communication, tending to forget all of the ambiguities concerning elements of change in any simple interpersonal communication, especially in matters concerning faith. In the same manner, the radical setting of the

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media have the positive value of giving new categories for examining the effectiveness of all other less complicated communication processes. This is especially true in the Church.

Estimates of the effects of the media have been so varied that it is necessary to look only to the most carefully controlled studies concerning the matter, and then come to our own conclusions based on our overall understandings of the communication process. The Centre For Mass Communications Research of Leicester University and the Television Research Committee of Great Britain are at present providing some of the best guidelines. The institute director, James D. Halloran, has built also upon American research in his continuing studies, and, after quoting Klapper's criticism of much inconclusive findings, states:

> . . . we know far more about mass communication and its effects than is generally recognized, and . . . the ultra-cautious and non-committal attitudes adopted by some people are by no means completely warranted.[33]

Dahmen, of the Swedish Broadcasting System, has noted this complication in the matter of change: "But now it could happen that we change our views. "Change" is perhaps not the exact word. What happens is that views from one level move

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[33]James D. Halloran, The Effects of Mass Communication (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1965), p. 12.

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to another."[34]

In any case, the message is to accomplish something in the direction of the sender's intentions. In almost any situation it is the nature of the psyche to act negatively to what would be considered to be in strong opposition to its value system.

The following is a summary of some definite areas where change can be measured through the media:

1. Reinforcement

Considering a person's goals in structuring reality and his desire to find congruence with his environment, his seeking for group support and justification for already held beliefs and attitudes, it is not surprising to discover that the media have a strong potential for reinforcing existing attitudes. The matter of selection and attention to the message is, of course, greatly simplified. This is, however, change. A radical reinforcement might involve a redefinition and refocusing of an attitude or opinion that could in actuality be a significant change, both for the person and for resultant interpersonal confrontations. It demonstrates that, even in this change, person was related somehow. There

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[34]Gunnar Dahmen, "The Presentation of the Christian Message Today," The Christian Broadcaster, XII: 4 (December 1965), 27.

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was communication. It opens the door to other categories of change.

Beside the predispositions towards sympathetic attention, the matters of group norms (already tending towards the same attitudes), and the manner in which communication content is re-disseminated strengthen the reinforcement process. Where there is predisposition to change itself, the same factors all strengthen change.[35]

2. Canalization of attitudes

The media are effective in appealing to needs of people and feelings they have about these needs by giving them definition and using persuasion as an invitation to the person to find satisfaction for his needs through the particular communication given. These attitudes may not even be manifest ones, but the communicator gives them shape. The attitudes might be given a shifted emphasis towards another goal that is shown to be really congruent with the existing attitudes. In a study by Cartwright in 1949 concerning Treasury Department campaigns, he concluded that "to induce a given action by mass persuasion, this action must be seen by the person as a path to some goal that he has."[36]

Canalization can change to propaganda when

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[35]See Klapper, op. cit., p. 49.

[36]Cited by ibid., p. 121.

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manipulation of attitudes is handled in order, ultimately, to arrive at objectives that might even be opposed to the real attitudes. This is radical reshaping of attitudes rather than canalization. This becomes propaganda. It is also the basic technique in some advertising campaigns with varying relatedness of final goals to original attitudes.

True canalization focuses on defining and canalizing real existent needs as over against creating new ones. The latter would be a real problem in persuasion in the media.

Integrity and honesty of person in relatedness are again involved here.

3. Creating of opinion concerning new issues

Although a completely "new" issue might be fairly difficult to find (in the sense that it was not already in some way related to the audience), it is generally agreed that the media are effective in shaping opinion about such issues. This is based on the conclusion that people have not already had any pre-existing strong opinions concerning the matter. In fact, says Klapper, such first opinion creation can have an "inoculating" effect against future contrary views presented. There are no hindrances of group norms or other mediating forces to mitigate against conversion. In similar fashion, relationships with opinion leaders are of a different nature. The same forces, in this case, work to complete

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the persuasive process.[37] It is of interest to note that the media are considered effective in shaping attitudes and opinions in areas where deep relatedness in the form of need is felt as over against the message, and also in the opposite area where the issues appear to be completely new.

4. Decision and conversion

To state the foregoing does not mean that "conversion does not occur nor that under certain conditions it may not be widespread."[38]

This is most frequent when the conditions of the mediating forces are most disposed to this, particularly with the proper influence of the opinion leaders in implementing the face-to-face confrontations to continue the opinion-shaping process. The possibility for such persuasibility is much higher among certain people, especially where there are feelings of inadequacy or where the entire cultural situation is a fluid one. Very little is known about details here, except that in many instances there is predisposition to persuasion leading to conversion and decision for the message.

Considering the incidence of people under cross-pressures and with feelings of inadequacy, indications would

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[37] Ibid., p. 61.

[38] Ibid., p. 50.

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be that this would include a wide spectrum of any given audience, especially where the principles of need definition are also applied.

In a set of six volumes, Hovland led research concerning persuasion and attitude change in mass communication.[39] The studies show how important it is that the source be a respected one, how fear-arousing content has a negative reaction concerning attitude change, how need arousal is an important factor in attitude change, how change is effected by first presenting clearly recognizable desirable contents before moving in to those not as clearly recognized as such, and, how presenting first a counter position somehow immunizes people against future presentation of that position.

The entire discussion of the intermediate role of the opinion leaders indicates how decision and conversion is a complex process, but does come about. In the 1948 voting studies, Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet reported the claims of opinion leaders that they were more influenced in their own decisions by mass communication than by other people. Continuing studies have shown that there is greater influence in interaction among themselves.[40]

Deutschmann's studies of the 1960 presidential debates

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[39]See Nathan Maccoby, "The New Scientific Rhetoric," in Schramm, The Science of Human Communication, pp. 41-50.

[40]Klapper, op. cit., p. 281.

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discovered that there was more change in vote intention among people who had followed the debates than otherwise.[41]

The Lazarsfeld, Berelson, Gaudet Studies of 1940 voting also showed there was 17% conversion, partial conversion or reconversion of voters because of radio.[42]

Studies by Lerner and McClelland have shown, at the same time, that radio-television can have very profound characterological effects that, in effect, are types of direct change. In a study of social science views of media effects, Ithiel de Solo Pool points to the above studies of Lerner and McClelland as showing direct effects of the media apart from the mediation idea of opinion leaders and the like. The studies are claimed to lead to the following conclusions:

> . . . the media provide the capacity to conceive of situations and ways of life quite different from those of direct experience . . . .
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Among direct and immediate effects on individuals are changes in: attention, saliency, information, skills, tastes, attitudes, and actions.
>
> Changes in each one of these may in turn change each of the others; changes in one's actions may change one's attitudes just as changes in one's attitudes may change

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[41]Lazarsfeld and Menzel, op. cit., footnote, p. 281.

[42]Cited in Joseph Klapper, "Mass Media and Persuasion," in Wilbur Schramm, The Process and Effects of Mass Communications (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1955), p. 305.

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one's actions . . . .[43]

There is also no question, however, that, as de Solo Pool states, "Psychotherapy shows that to change deeply rooted attitudes requires the development of an intense relationship with a reference person."[44] This would, therefore, require a combination of media and face-to-face communication.

A series of UNESCO studies of radio-television in Asia and Africa substantiate the above elements of transformation being found. In a summary statement of a study in Asia it is claimed that "here experience has already proved that radio and television are powerful forces of transformation."[45] And again, "Properly utilized, broadcasting can lead the people to the recognition of the need for change, and can help to apply those ideas within the context of any particular group."[46]

The report, in speaking of the media, found that:

> . . . they address themselves to the entire personality of the listener or viewer . . . . Radio, and especially television, are the most 'personal' of all mass

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[43]Ithiel de Solo Pool, "Mass Media and Their Inter-Personal Social Functions," in Dexter, op. cit., pp. 439-40.

[44]Ibid.

[45]UNESCO, Radio and Television in the Service of Education and Development in Asia (Report No. 49; Paris: 1967), p. 42.

[46]Ibid., p. 41.

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> media of communication . . . . Broadcasting takes place in the public market and has a profound impact upon individuals and society as a whole.[47]

The report also stresses the necessity of combining the media with other forms of communication, and the projects invariably tried to set up productive listener interaction in some way. Several similar investigations by UNESCO produced similar results.[48]

It would seem that in the matter of change and conversion the media can contribute greatly to the decision process. Of course, this is all that any communication process can do. The media experts all are quick to say that almost nothing is known about the long-term effects of the media. It is here, the author suggests, that some of the greatest possibilities lie. In the ways that the media "feed the interpersonal channels", "confer status", "broaden the policy dialogue", the media "help . . . to change strongly held attitudes or valued practices," with emphasis on the "help".[49]

In the demonstrated characterological effects and the great ability to give definition to need and to shape attitudes towards need satisfaction (with or without the

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[47] Ibid., pp. 12-13.

[48] UNESCO Reports No. 30, 33, 37, 38, 48. (See Bibliography).

[49] See Schramm's analysis particularly, Mass Communication and National Development, pp. 127-44.

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mediating factors), radio-television must not be undergraded in their potentialities in the field of change. They make all of the elements in the communication process critical in the media's different setting.

To summarize, from earliest notions or expectations of the media's automatic capabilities of an almost overwhelming injection of new ideas and controls over society as a mass, our understandings have again matured after earlier scholarly suspicion of any effectiveness in the field of change, matured toward new understandings and awareness that there are many things yet unknown. Word event is in a somewhat different setting with a different confrontation of person and a complicated social interaction. Radio-television can reinforce, canalize attitudes, create opinion on new issues and can contribute to decision and conversion processes.

We now see the media as exciting possibilities that capitalize on complexities of audience interaction at the same time that the particular personal nature of the media discover new ways to relate to person through authentic word. There are new disciplines to learn concerning this word, a word that, in reaching out to the other, is faithful to the nature of the media and the particular message with which the Christian communicator is concerned.

The final chapter must project these understandings of person in the structures of faith and those of the media and seek to evaluate the actual potential for the Church's use of

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radio-television in achieving its communication goals concerning its fundamental and determinative element, namely, faith.

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CHAPTER V

PROGNOSIS: THE POTENTIAL OF RADIO/TELEVISION FOR COMMUNICATING THE CONCERNS OF FAITH

This chapter examines the prospects for the Church's use of radio-television on the basis of the categories of message and media within the framework of person as presented in previous chapters.

The media are "public", to be used as a public trust. They are also "worldly", to be used in the world.

The Church is calling for responsible use of these great communication tools. A kaleidescope of knowledgeable voices raises this concern. Barnerd M. Luben, speaking for RAVEMCCO, tells of the ferment and growth of large communication projects and appeals for a consultation concerning priorities with the conclusion: "What is the best way to declare the Gospel, . . . to enter the secular world and redeem it?"[1]

Leading churchmen on the African continent are also eager, such as Emmanuel Gabre Sillassie, Ethiopian leader, who declared, "For centuries the 'talking drum' was the only communicator in Africa . . . . Every day, Africans and Asians

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[1]Cited in Harold M. Martin, "The Coming Crisis in Christian Communication," (A RAVEMCCO Report), The Christian Broadcaster, XIV; 2 (August 1967), 34.

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listen to millions of words coming through . . . their radios."[2] This was echoed by Sir Francis Ibiam at a consultation to consider "Christian Communications in Contemporary Africa" in 1965: "I hereby make a strong and humble appeal to Christian men and women to get themselves not merely interested, but to be seriously involved in the knowledge and techniques of mass media development . . . ."[3] Chief E. P. Okoya, Minister of Information in Eastern Nigeria added ". . . we believe in the all-around development of our people physically and spiritually . . . . We believe in the effectiveness of the mass media in bringing this about through religious broadcasts."[4] This is Africa today where the number of nations with television increased from four to twenty in four years.

Schultz, a leading Christian world spokesman concerning the media, after describing the peculiarities of radio particularly, concluded:

> I should like to see a part assigned to religious broadcasting within the total effort of the Church which is far more powerful than it is generally considered to be by its followers as well as its opponents . . . .
>
> I believe religious broadcasting, in its diverse

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[2]Emmanuel Gabre Sillassie, The Importance of Radio in Africa (Paper prepared for Radio Voice of the Gospel, Addis Ababa, 1963).

[3]News item in The Christian Broadcaster, XII; 3 (October 1965), 54.

[4]Ibid.

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> effectiveness, to be a reality of immense theological and ecclesiological importance.[5]

A certain amount of encouragement comes to the Church from statements of men such as Klapper, in his studies in depth concerning radio-television, who shows guarded optimism within the realistic boundaries of each media. He claims the media "are able to provide their audiences with a sense of participation, personal access, and 'reality' which approximate face-to-face contact . . . ."[6]

What is of genuine concern to the serious communicator and student of the media is that the Church face its task with realistic goals and realistic concern for its audience, a consideration presented by Kenneth Lamb of the BBC:

> We must always have in mind that religious broadcasting to the uncommitted is futile if it fails to arouse a genuine response; and that to arouse that response it needs to be deeply concerned with the common human predicament in which Christians and non-Christians are alike involved, before it can fruitfully bring Christian insights to bear on that predicament.[7]

This chapter examines concretely various elements that contribute to a practical prognosis for these above aspirations. Beginning with a short discussion of the theological approach to the media itself and the matter of the uniqueness

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[5]Hans Jurgen Schultz, Proclaiming the Gospel Over The Air (Geneva: World Council of Churches) (Mimeographed.)

[6]Joseph T. Klapper, The Effects of Mass Communication (Glencoe: Free Press, 1960), p. 111.

[7]Kenneth Lamb, "Religious Broadcasting," The Christian Broadcaster, XII; 2 (July 1965), 9.

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of the Gospel, it attempts to evaluate past knowledge gained concerning the effectiveness of religious broadcasting. Applying the results of the conclusions of former chapters, this section continues by suggesting six specific areas where the best potential for communicating the word concerning faith is to be found, namely, the following:

(1) In the overall general approach involving the totality of person.

(2) In fitting the inter-personal complexities of the media communication processes to the categories of faith in relationship and the interaction of creative authentic word.

(3) In the all-important category of fulfilment of person through the promising process of need definition and satisfaction.

(4) In understanding the potential of the Gospel as information of great import, tying in with point three and capitalizing on a great power of the media.

(5) In the invitation to participate, to fellowship.

(6) In the very necessary development of channels of dialogue between source and receiver.

Communication is presented in the context of the affirmation of world just as faith itself is. The media themselves are claimed for the Lord of faith who calls the Church also to open itself to the resources of the Gospel and to reach out in a pastoral approach to the listener--not calling to a wrong kind of radical change, but to a radical

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renewal through the Gospel that is fulfilment of person in the faith relationship. As the Church is faithful to this sort of stewardship, ultimate success rests with God. The chapter seeks to show that this faithfulness is a concrete matter.

I. PRIMARY THEOLOGICAL APPROACH TO THE MEDIA

If faith primarily involves relationship, then theology asks the media what happens to person in radio-television communication. If faith is encounter that finds its dynamic in continuing relationship, an I-Thou relationship with God that gives new dimensions to inter-personal relationships, do the media violate this structure? In this question, theology makes its aims parallel to those of the authentic communication process. To show that the elements of the communication process via radio-television are compatible with the intrinsic elements of communication in the faith relationship itself means to take a positive theological stance concerning the media. To insist, however, on automatic integrity of person in the media would be to demand more than is the case with any other form of communication.

Such a concern was involved in Bachman's statement:

> Is the difference rather one of degree than of kind? The Church has always been unable to express the perfect wholeness of the Word. It is impossible for us to communicate the full Gospel. Only Christ has manifested the Father in his fulness. We communicate something of the

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Gospel, but we also impede it.[8]

To study the question of theological integrity in the use of the media means to discover that the same criteria must again be measured against the entire witness of the Church. Obstacles discovered in media communication are often revealed to be in similar form in other structures of the Church's witness. An immediate reminder is that the Church must never be overly dependent on any one form of communication.

General Theological Stance

The simplistic view consists of the notion that radio-television has given us real automated communication. The concept of mass, of power, of totally objective dynamic of word apart from the framework of person, all lead to this view. As is the case with the same view elsewhere, the necessity to be human, to understand man, to relate to reality and to work at entering the world with the Word is all denigrated in varying degrees.

Sellers refers to the two main heresies of Christian communication as (1) the notion that radio-television can only carry messages concerning material possibilities, and (2) the opposite one claiming that religious communication

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[8]John Bachman, The Church in the World of Radio-Television (New York: Association Press, 1960), p. 123.

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has primarily to do with skillful techniques.[9]

Reference has also been made to Van den Heuvel's distinction between "communication-theologians", and "media-theologians".[10] The former group, though concerned with communication and interpreting it in broad theological outline (often based on the concept of the interaction of the Trinity, or of the two natures of Christ as Barth's symbolization of the essence of communication), is quick to interpret the complexities of the modern world simply as destroying person-to-person. The communicative nature of faith is stressed, but in too narrow terms.

On the other hand, the media-theologians, claims Van den Heuvel, observe the dynamic role of the media in society (so they claim), start from there with the media as something a very part of their lives and go on with the task of proclaiming the Gospel. They feel that the media open up new forms of relationship and participation as a dimension of their times. The two groups need each other. The concept of faith as communication must be fused practically with a vigorous claiming of the media for the Gospel with the warning that "the inductive thinkers run the danger of forgetting that the revelation comes from the other side and

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[9]James Sellers, The Outsider and the Word of God (New York: Abingdon Press, 1961), pp. 29-32.

[10]Albert Van den Heuvel, "A Meditation About Theology, Communication, and the Mass Media," The Christian Broadcaster, IX:2 (August 1967), pp. 9-10.

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not from the media themselves."[11]

Beyond the stances of either condemnation or complete suspicion of the media, or the opposite extreme of operating or controlling the media for "full use" by the Church, or the more mature stance of just seeing positive possibilities in the secular media's finding artistic ways of illuminating the human situation and giving support to this--beyond this lies the most natural potential of entering the radio-television world in a natural fashion with the feeling that it is not something so extraordinary in the Church's relationship to society. It must make the media part of its total expression in the world, supporting any efforts to help men understand what the human quest is about and, without any special complex, entering the media and speaking of its concerns of the Gospel in various ways.

The Gospel is a unique communication. Without forgetting the picture of the social context necessary for any communication, we are reminded that it involves more than just communication between two partners about the concern of the sender, but it is God's powerful word and involves the Holy Spirit. This neither obviates the necessity to apply one's self to the communication task nor does it define the dynamic of the process as a fortunate congruence of sociological principles.

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[11] Ibid., p. 13.

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The Gospel, as God's dynamic communication to man, has power to change. But, it is not separated from man in the context in which he finds himself. It is not primarily MY faith that is to be communicated to another but a concern for the truth of the Gospel that sets up the pre-conditions for the receiver's encounter of faith as a new relationship. In this sense, the network might be different. However, the element of relationship of source to receiver is, at the same time, an integral part of the process.

The question is not primarily, "Can the media persuade of the fact of faith," but, rather, "Can the Gospel be given an authentic setting in the media (including the necessity of the loving witness to it through person) in order to allow the receiver to be led to a decision for the Gospel and to faith as encounter, resulting in a new fellowship.

Justification of the Search For Effective Communication

With the above in mind, it is difficult to understand Hendrik Kraemer's claim that "the search for successful communication has no Biblical justification."[12] Just because the message of the Gospel is essentially beyond the wisdom of men does not imply that wisdom concerning men must not be brought to the communication task. The entire concept of the Incarnation belies such an attitude. Jesus gave the

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[12]Hendrik Kraemer, The Communication of the Christian Faith (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1956), p. 31.

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excellent example in his encounters. The Apostle Paul also, in I Cor. 9:19-23, dramatizes his concern to "become all things to all men . . . . I do it all for the sake of the gospel . . . ."

Brunner spoke of the seriousness of the effort to communicate as over against reliance on God no matter how obscure we make the process:

> What I should say to a man upon his death-bed is a holy matter; but it is a matter no less holy how I am to say it to him in such a way that he shall understand and appreciate it. A pastor might--to put it somewhat strongly--go to heaven on account of the WHAT but go to hell on account of the HOW. To despise the question of the HOW is a sign, not of theological seriousness but of theological intellectualism.[13]

The meaning of the foregoing is that the theologian and communicator has the responsibility to examine the nature of his efforts in the media not only as concerns the message but the structures of the process itself. The paradox facing this responsibility is the fact that the Gospel is at the same time a positive constituting of existence and a "skandalon", the "holding true of that which has hitherto been considered not true, indeed quite absurd," according to Buber,[14] or, in the words of Tillich:

> There is always a genuine decision against the Gospel for those for whom it is a stumbling block. But this

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[13]Emil Brunner, Nature and Grace (London: Centenary Press, 1946), p. 58, cited by Sellers, op. cit., p. 39.

[14]Martin Buber, Two Types of Faith (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1951), pp. 10-11.

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> decision should not be dependent on the wrong stumbling block, namely, the wrong way of our communication of the Gospel--our inability to communicate. What we have to do is to overcome the wrong stumbling block in order to bring people face to face with the right stumbling block and enable them to make a genuine decision.[15]

This kind of responsible search for effective communication is found in the Papal Bull convening the second Vatican Council, "Humanae Salutis," in the words of Pope John: "We have to bring into contact with the life-giving and perpetual forces of the Gospel this modern world."[16]

This is the dimension of the theological approach to the media.

Validation Through Research

At the critical point of validation of communication procedures through scientific research concerning audience reaction, the communicators still speak largely in the future tense. The type of thorough and scientifically controlled study that would be definitive has not yet been done in any way that would justify making unassailable conclusions concerning types of change brought about by the use of radio-television by the Church.

Scattered evaluations of effects by interested parties have the danger of being influenced by an a priori viewpoint

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[15]Paul Tillich, The Theology of Culture (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 213.

[16]Cited by Henri Queffelec, Technology and Religion (New York: Hawthorne, 1964), p. 8.

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which tends to color the conclusions. Similar problems in the secular use of the media have also become apparent. With growing knowledge of the complexities of the mediating factors in radio-television communication many older methods of audience research have proven to give very incomplete pictures.

The problem of methodology in research is one of the greatest to be faced. Methods are also being researched.

Halloran points to a problem in measuring effects:

> It should be clear then that the effect relationship is not a simple one yet there are many who still tend to present the issue as an over-simplified, one to one relationship.[17]

He reminds again of all of the wider inter-relationships, that messages are not received in isolation. Research concerning effects in religious broadcasting should not be considered a totally unrelated field. There are many different levels from that of measuring the ability of the message to hold attention and secure a perception of what is presented to that of specific attitude changes and questions of values. Any research process, as Jahoda states, must consist of "the formulation of a research problem; the research design; methods of data collection; and analysis and inter-

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[17]James D. Halloran, The Effects of Mass Communication (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1965), p. 36.

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pretation."[18]

She states that the problem needs to be broken down into manageable sizes, all interrelated. Special and substantive methodological knowledge in the field is definitely needed. In our case, on the deeper level, hypotheses of some causal relationship must be tested, the formulation of specific questions. The usual method is to use a control group along with the group to which we would expose the radio-television programming intended to communicate the concerns of faith. A variety of approaches would have to be used, with each testing aiming for a specific element such as type of reaction to one particular program, or to a series of programs.

It is difficult to see just how such measurements can be reliably made, considering the nature of the message. I don't believe that a really functional testing has been devised. Jahoda makes this warning:

> The crudest possible mistake is to assume that the question one asks in data collection is on the same level of conceptualization as the bigger research question . . . . If an investigator just passed on his conceptual question to his respondents, he would do nothing more than replace his own ignorance of the answer by the collective ignorance of his respondents.[19]

The researcher will claim, with Jahoda, that "every

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[18]Marie Jahoda, "Research Methods," in James Halloran, Attitude Formation and Change (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1967), pp. 137-45.

[19]Ibid. p. 145.

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act, judgment or perception is invariably based simultaneously on what is inside the individual and what is outside."[20] It should be possible to arrive at basic conclusions concerning attention, interest, selection and perception--all of which contribute to the possibilities of relating to person via the media.

The methodology in data collection for religious broadcasting should seek indications that the six areas for greatest potential as outlined on page 130 are finding response in the listener. This would suggest, at least, that the potential for conceptual and non-conceptual changes are also there.

Indications should be sought as to whether the listener has gained understandings of life in its larger relationships (to God and to others) and, particularly, of the sense of liberation, fulfilment and fellowship that the Gospel offers.

It would seem most promising to analyze cases where listeners seem to have responded authentically and then work backward to discover all of the factors involved, the group relationships and the like. From this a determination of the specifics would be sought concerning the questions related to the listener's "predispositions, the program content, its impact (immediate response to it, and the outcome (subse-

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[20] Ibid., p. 147.

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quent effects as a result of interaction of the above factors)."[21]

It remains, nonetheless, quite problematical as to whether, under the category of outcome, the conceptual or non-conceptual effects can be satisfactorily isolated in cause and effect manner. One of the main reasons is the importance of the long term effect element.

In any case, even in face-to-face communication of the concerns of faith, something happens, not behaviorally in the usual sense, but in the discovery of what it means to become a person fulfilled and liberated. The communicator must use real caution, however, in always presuming an ability to objectify or measure such responses. He proceeds on the basis that true communication brings awareness of the meaning, purpose and feeling of the communicator and some sort of commitment to the same. The non-conceptual is difficult to measure in life. Where non-discursive communication is used, speaking symbolically of the experience of reality, the problem is compounded. Yet, it would seem valid to seek for response of some sort, even of a very uncomplicated nature, to determine if the presentation spoke to the listener in any way.

The very nature of such responses, however, are contrary to precise objectification. To insist on the latter

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[21]James D. Halloran, Problems of Television Research (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1966), p. 20.

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might be contrary to the artistic intent and integrity of the communication.

To keep the issue from becoming clouded, the more specific research should be directed to the particular questions raised concerning the media's ability to relate to person.

The New Haven Research Project of over a decade ago was the first serious attempt at research concerning religious broadcasting and was intended as only a beginning. It did discover that there were complexities in the way in which the audience responded and took note of many of the stereotyped pitfalls of religious programming and the lack of understanding of the necessity for group reference.

Many religious organizations have done surveys on listenership but nothing of great significance is known about specific responses and reasons for in the particular contexts.

The World Association For Christian Broadcasting, through its research secretary in London, reports the effects of television relays to twenty-five centers of the Billy Graham crusades in June, 1967. His assessments are interesting:

> By TV relays to twenty-five centers in Britain and Northern Ireland he addressed a further 543,042 people of whom 24,163 came forward (4.4%). It would appear that the impact via TV was as great as the impact of physical participation at Earl's Court. Viewers speak of the immediacy of the T.V. image, and of the preacher's vivid presence. For most who were present at Earl's Court,

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> Billy Graham was only a tiny, distant figure with a large voice. Certain centers relayed sound only, and at these there is recorded a significant drop in percentage of "enquirers".[22]

In this instance, however, it must be considered that these were prepared, predisposed audiences, already committed to attention and ready for involvement. At the same time, the report shows that structure of the televiewing was not different from presence at the source.

Tinna, speaking out of his leadership in Swedish Religious Broadcasting, mentions specific results from different types of programs, especially good documentaries, concluding that "they not only create a friendly climate. More than once we have received messages from people who were so moved by a documentary that they felt they had to go to a pastor and get guidance on the matter of their personal faith."[23]

Dahmen, his countryman, made a survey of World Christian Broadcasters' meetings beginning at London in 1955 (a limited group with exchange of experience), then at Kronberg in 1957 (first world view), at Stockholm in 1958, at Oxford in 1960 with an examination of the audience which was classified as a combination of believers, interested and indifferent, with the "interested" group given major importance as a mediating group, to Hilversum in 1962 and much study of new

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[23]Sverre Tinna, "Presenting Religion On the Air," The Christian Broadcaster, XII; 3 (October 1965), 14.

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types of TV programming (untraditional), at Arnoldshain in 1964 and more of the same, at Glasgow in 1966 with the theme, "Making Known the Bible" with little progress since Hilversum.

After ten years of observation, Dahmen concluded by re-emphasizing the primary importance of capitalizing on the influence of the people who are already interested in one way or another.[24] Research has shown the need for varying formats to accomplish this very thing.

In his experience preparing programs of widely ranging formats for Radio Voice of the Gospel in Madagascar, the author observed general audience reactions as related to different audience types, convinced that programming that speaks to the whole man and presents the Gospel in this setting does produce, or bring to final form, change in the audience. In a sample survey of 120 letters from listeners in 1965 that indicated some direct effects from radio broadcasting, it was of significance just to discover that twenty-eight of these definitely indicated quite radical decisions for the Gospel. Of these twenty-eight, eighteen were the result of interpersonal mediating factors in the audience, and ten, from all appearances, seemed to represent radical direct individual change from indifference and ignorance to sympathy and

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[24]Gunnar Dahmen, "European Conference 1966--Where Do We Go From Here?" The Christian Broadcaster, XIII: 3 (October 1966), 8-12.

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acceptance. Several of these were personally verified either by the author or by his associates. A typical response was the following:

> There were churches in all the different area I have lived, but they meant nothing to me at all. I just considered them as so much rock "blocking the way". But now, for four months I have had a radio and by chance found the RVOG programs and was amazed and wept because of my lost and dumb spirit, having lived so long in darkness . . . . I beg you to help me.[25]

After reading listeners' letters for three years, the author's impression of the media's ability to speak to person was significant.

Research has reinforced the general view of the audience as a complicated phenomenon with varying degrees of attention and with definite indications of varying effects in response. There are still many unknowns here which would caution against opting for either traditional type programming or for radically new presentations. The potential for communication is there.

II. THE BEST POTENTIAL FOR COMMUNICATING THE CONCERNS OF FAITH

With a general potential for communication through radio-television, this section suggests ways of approach that are congruent with research, with the concerns of faith and with the concerns of the media.

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[25]Listeners' letters, Radio Voice of the Gospel, Madagascar.

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General Approach to the Effective Use of Radio-Television

Our study would seem to indicate the following general guidelines for the religious broadcaster:

1. Avoid docetism. The basic problem in communication, especially the media, is to make the phenomenon real. It is also the concern of faith. To capture the attention and the concern of the listener, the concerns of faith must be presented in a context of reality and lead to a renewal of person within reality as over against calling for the wrong kind of decision against reality and the context of person in "world".

This means, as it does in the faith relationship previously described, that the total concerns of the person are addressed as over against a wrong dichotomy of sacred-secular. This will show up in program format, content and general manner. It will relate to the whole man.

2. Have a wholesome concept of the "personal". Come with an understanding of "person" in the communication process, of the structures of the self in dialogue and its needs for congruence, of the need to build relatedness where the limitation of the media would mitigate against this. This involves a sincere entering into the situation of the listener, seeking to illuminate that situation, reaching out in a gesture toward him, realizing that love is the most significant act of communication and of person. Avoid

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sentimentality over the media. Appeal to the person in life experience and have confidence in the power of the media, in their own way, to create community of person. Avoid over-individualization and pious introversion as a substitute for genuine "person" that always reaches outward. Show the meaning of your appeal to him. These factors correspond to the basic elements of person as described in chapter two and person in communication as pictured in chapter four.

3. Avoid using the media in isolation. In matters of faith, where deep values are involved, recognize the greater potential of various forms of communication working in concert upon society, filling in and mutually supporting each other in relating to the listener. Of particular importance is the combination of both oral and printed word.

4. Capitalize on greater change potential in fluid cultural situations. Reference has been made in chapter four to susceptibility to change where person or society is in a situation of general change. The developing nation is a prime example of this.

These guidelines will give positive direction to the general approach to the media. Other more concrete elements are also involved in the Church's effective use of radio-television.

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Using To Advantage the Media's Complexities

This means taking special note of the nature of these complexities and finding congruence with the structure and nature of the message carrying the concerns of faith. There is no justification for a rigid approach that is unrealistic about these complexities. There is much support for the notion that concerns of faith do naturally follow the same patterns to a large extent.

The communicator recognizes that he has a fluid situation to deal with. His communication is not a simple one-to-one relationship.

Earlier chapters showed the importance of relationships in the understanding of faith as related to life. The self was shown to have its definition in community. The person in the faith relationship is not something circumscribed but reaches out both in attempts to discover particular facets of the truth of the faith encounter and in the continuing interpersonal sustaining of faith. The communicator doesn't put hindrances to the message concerning faith by ignoring the complexities of the communication flow in radio-television, either deliberately or unconsciously.

There are, first of all, possibilities for the primary step in the process. Secondly, the all-important matter of interpersonal references enters in, the feeding of the interpersonal channels. An understanding of this latter avoids the presentation of concerns of faith as only in a

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here-and-now totally private context demanding an immediate and unequivocal "yes" to the faith encounter.

This study has shown the media's complexities to include the following: the message goes from the media, is given varying degrees of attention, but is primarily attended to by key persons called opinion leaders who are naturally more disposed to this for varying reasons. The opinion leaders (and, also, those by nature already "interested") exchange information in mutual reference and, in turn, are the leaders in a continuing complex interpersonal web of communication constantly fed by the media. The media are "mobility multipliers". Using to advantage the complexities of the media follows these guidelines:

1. Give critical attention to the manner of the first contact. Identify the sender. Anonymity hinders communication, especially where values are involved. Identify with definite recognition of the personalities. Make them known through other media also. Avoid the anonymity of an impersonal and organizational source, the supra-personal network as described.

2. Use authentic word as described. Avoid using word that is a "cleft between selfhood and linguisticality," in the words of James Robinson. "We must relate language more

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directly with experience."[26]

In the Christian understanding of existence, when we speak of the concerns of faith as handed down to us, we must ask what this coding itself did to the experience, so that when we again encode we attempt to get the same ingredient in our communication today. This does not mean a subjectivizing of the experience. Use language as an embodiment of person, as creative, as partaking of love, the distinguishing characteristic of authentic person. Especially in radio, it is word that carries the burden in communication. Ebeling's warning that words cannot be used to "tame God" is important; "there are no magic words."[27] In Ebeling's volume, God and Word, he develops this in this way:

> Talk of God that lacks authenticity, that has become empty and powerless, spells disintegration to faith and thought . . . . Talk of God is word at its most demanding, because it demands pure faith.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Far more than is normally realized, our customary talk of God--dull sermons and pious words which have no bearing on reality . . .--has become empty . . . . The consequences of this are not by any means to be found only in the religious realm, but also are considerable outside of it--namely, in the devaluation of words in general, the debilitation of the responsible use of language.[28]

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[26]From author's class notes, James M. Robinson, "Hermeneutic", Fall, 1967, Claremont Graduate School.

[27]Gerhard Ebeling, Word and Faith (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1963), pp. 193-94.

[28]Ebeling, God and Word (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), pp. 4-5.

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Barth's insights in his later writings support the search for authentic word at the same time that they remind us of that which must be guarded. There should be no special language for outsiders. It should all speak to us in our contemporary situation. Barth explains as follows:

> What we have to say to them--and first of all to ourselves--is a strange piece of news in any case. Let us see to it that it really is the great (it.) piece of news--the message of the eternal love of God directed to us men as we at all time were, are, and shall be.[29]

3. Have confidence in the message's ability to produce characterological changes as mentioned. If faith is presented as concern of person in its wholeness, the structures of the media would, in this case also, provide potentials in this area leading toward positive change and providing the matrix for more interpersonal development. These have been mentioned before as changes in attention, saliency, information, skills, tastes, attitudes and actions. They are important for establishing communication between the original source and primary receivers.

4. Count on the multi-step process to do its work. Present the concerns of faith as inviting to dialogue, relating to current interpersonal issues involving deepest

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[29]Karl Barth, The Humanity of God (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1960), p. 59.

See discussion pp. 61 ff., this study, on language and person; also pp. 108 ff. on word in radio-television.

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concerns of contemporary person that may already be material in interpersonal dialogue. In other words, relate the invitation to the renewing encounter of faith to specific meanings in reality so that the interpersonal communication will find it easier to have substance and body. This means avoiding abstractions without relatedness, a factor which would not only mitigate against the primary giving of attention but also against the ongoing dialogue of face-to-face.

To use to advantage the complexities of media communication, while avoiding anonymity and striving for authentic word, would seem to indicate that there would be more reliance on long-term effects.

The total presentation of the message should be in the context of relatedness to actual community in which the listeners carry out their interpersonal communication. The "religious" presentation should not be pictured as a compartmentalized production set off from the rest of radio-television (and, therefore, life).

Need Recognition and Arousal in the Process of Fulfilment

Of great significance for this study is the fact that in seeking to keep the integrity of person and, also, to make the concerns of faith "real" just as the concerns of person in communication are real, the communicator does not gain his ends in a process of camouflage of his message, of presenting

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"religion in disguise", to use Dahmen's phrase,[30] but his concerns lie, rather, in the direction of making his approach authentic and the message relevant to person in reality, person seeking fulfilment. Our discussion of faith centered around the categories of wholeness of person, person in relationship, person as liberated (basically through divine forgiveness), faith as total concern of person and fulfilment of latent needs. This faith as fellowship flowing out of encounter with the God of all community is not reduced, as Sittler has so aptly reminded, to "psychological reassurance" but as "faith in the faithfulness of God."[31]

Of greatest concern, in this matter is the genuine gesture of the sender to lead the receiver to recognition of the needs latent in person, needs that are then fulfilled by the faith relationship. There is no place for the long contrived "gimmick" that is not authentically related to the existential concerns of the receiver. It is both false and unfruitful. Relevant parables can be used to good effect.

The essential problem of the communicator in radio-television is to find a relatedness across the boundaries of the filtering process. His efforts must be aimed at presenting a context in which the listener himself makes his own relatedness as he finds himself engaged in recognition of

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[30]Gunnar Dahmen, op. cit., p. 11.

[31]Joseph Sittler, cited by Bachman, op. cit., p. 113.

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his own person. The message allows him to consider what are his own goals. He involves himself in recognizing and giving shape to the correct questions, the concern often mentioned by Tillich especially. These concerns may be both existential and ontological in the very call to being.

Our studies have shown that the feelings of inadequacy, a fairly universal one, is definitely related to persuasibility. The persuasions of the concerns of faith as fulfilment also reach more easily the person who recognizes and gives definition to his situation under several cross-pressures. Luther, Bultmann and others showed the concerns of faith as delivering from the crises of one's personal situation, the crisis of conscience and the crisis of insecurity before the world. The two are intertwined.

Likewise, the person who has been led to recognize his feeling of finitude is both relieved, in a fashion, to have his feeling defined and to ponder a relevant message that leads to wholeness in the deepest sense.

The communicator, therefore, does not just respond to a popular demand. Relevance isn't adjustment of the message to a shallow understanding of the situation one finds in the person. "It is all right," writes Bachman, "to meet listeners and viewers where they are, but it is hardly worthy of a Christian broadcast simply to leave them there."[32]

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[32]Bachman, op. cit., p. 112.

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Langer, in her perceptive studies of the person that are dynamically involved in the self's struggle to structure its environment, states that "our first consciousness is the sense of need . . . ."[33]

Our studies of the self have shown how the presentation of faith as fulfilment speaks to a need defined in the terms of self as lonely, out of communication, often in dissonance respecting feelings and actions or knowledge and action. The concerns of the Apostle Paul were the same: "I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me." (Rom. 7:18-20).

At the bottom of all human strivings is not the presence of variously defined bodily drives but that which Frankl calls "the most fundamental of all human strivings: the search for the meaning of life, or at least for a meaning in life."[34] To miss the responsibility and opportunity to help the listener recognize the need for meaning and fulfilment is to miss the open door to radio-television communication. As the media can help the decision process, so the

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[33]Suzanne Langer, Philosophy in a New Key (Harvard University Press, 1963), p. 148.

[34]Viktor Frankl, referred to in an article, "Meaning in Life," Time Magazine, (Feb. 2, 1968). See also, Frankl, "The Will to Meaning," in Kyle Haselden (ed.), Are You A Nobody (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1966). pp. 23-31.

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process must be rooted in the solid substance of relevant need.

In this sense, the message of faith as relating to person is that of a healing phenomenon. The original concept of salvation was that of healing. Luther's commentary on Galatians presents the hearing of the Gospel in faith as the healing of the total man. The crisis of conscience becomes the confidence of conscience.[35] The communicator uses the media in such a way as to avoid wrong abstractions, avoid raising the wrong questions and avoid a stereotyped process of presenting a distorted picture of radical renewal from a present situation unrelated to reality and couched in value terms that the listener cannot easily relate to his latent needs.

The radio-television communicator recognizes in it all that, as Ramsdell says, "Nothing can speak to the ontological anxiety of man's existence except the healing Word of God himself. Communication from the Christian perspective becomes communication at the existential level."[36] This involves real communication of person, of our very selves, because the meanings of the Gospel cannot be separated from

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[35]Roger Johnson, "Is Bultmann an Heir of Luther?" Dialog, VI (Autumn 1967), 265-75.

[36]E. T. Ramsdell, "Communication From a Christian Perspective," Religious Education, L:5 (September-October 1965), 337.

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person.

The work of God's Spirit cannot be circumscribed, but neither can the man of faith stand detached from the process of communication of faith any more than his authentic person is detached from his own faith that is defined in relationship.

The Gospel is to be made relevant to the person in need.

The Gospel as Information of Supreme Import

The media are especially effective in disseminating information. The person receives what he considers relevant information and makes it a part of his stored information. The relevance and importance of the Gospel as very relevant information for the person recognizing his needs should play a crucial part in media communication, inasfar as it has been related concretely.

The original meaning of "εὐαγγελίζω" is "to announce good news". Likewise, the sense of "κηρύσσω" (to preach) is "to proclaim openly", like a "κήρυξ" (herald). It has a particular oral character and is basically defined as a good and relevant piece of information. It is, however, of such a nature that it must have the way prepared by need recognition and arousal. This is how the law prepares the way for the Gospel. Christian communication has the natural duty to proclaim information of great importance, also in the same

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public way that the original meanings of the above words were interpreted. The media certainly have, in this way, a definite affinity with the Gospel, but always in the context of which we have previously spoken.

Cybernetics is concerned particularly with information as "impact", depending on just what real impact producing information a word or expression brings. Nida remarks, in speaking of Jesus, that "in a sense he can be called the "master communicator", for he not only spoke the language of the people but also framed his teachings in forms which have optimum 'information value' as well as truth. His words were truth with impact."[37]

To the person in the process of recognizing the form of his needs and discovering the boundaries of his limitations, sensing his distorted person recognized as sin, and frustrated by the structures of the law that oppress and condemn,--this person sees the Gospel not only as offense but hears it as true information with impact. As the Gospel presented in this way enters the world of reality of the listeners it also is relevant information that should become a factor in the continuing exchange and flow of the multi-step process. Again, above the classification of the Gospel as information valid for man is the recognition that its impact as God's valid word to man partakes of the nature described

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[37]Eugene A. Nida, Message and Mission (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1960). p. 75.

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by Ebeling and others as "effective word", as word event where God accomplishes what he promises, what is announced as good news of a new possibility freeing man and inviting him to faith in relationship that brings a "new" life. The Gospel as information has promise in the media.

The Invitation to Participate

Mention has been made by both theologians and media specialists of the particular structure of radio-television that invites participation by the listener. We can examine also how the concerns of faith in relatedness to person invite to participate. Klapper has been cited as claiming for both radio and television a sense of participation for the audience.[38]

A communication that demands or forces specified reactions does not respect the integrity of the person. It also is unnatural to radio-television. Here, particularly, the listener is called upon to participate in the communication experience. The options of the Gospel and of the renewing faith relationship are presented for reflection against the background of need recognition in which he also has participated. Dumas, in tying up the invitation to participate with the notion of the Gospel as information, writes:

> A Christian communication should not provide a solution but an opening. It began with a conviction; it will

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[38]Joseph Klapper, op. cit., p. 111.

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> end, like so many of Jesus' encounters, with an interrogation. . . .
>
> I feel we have to rediscover a form of information which is at the same time collective and personalized, corresponding to the mass civilization in which we are living.[39]

This is tied up with the simple recognition of the listener as a person and not (which is the danger of the media) as a "machine to be operated, or a vegetable to be cultivated."[40] The program must enter into the situation of the listener, and in this context make the invitation to participate, not just by so many words but through the very character of the program. It means again, not accommodation to what might be considered the most common value systems but taking them seriously. The observation of Lamb is helpful: "The proper mood of religious broadcasting is the indicative, not the imperative."[41]

In the fullest sense of the word, the radio-television communicator takes the stance of a servant, reaching out to serve in all areas of the person's life--giving the genuine servant image in the mind of the listener. There must be "heart" in this servanthood that overcomes the outward

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[39]Andre Dumas, "Christian Communication and Modern Information," paper read at the National Information Conference, Bievres, September 1963. (Mimeographed.)

[40]Bachman, op. cit., p. 55.

[41]Kenneth Lamb, op. cit., p. 9.

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structures of the media as seemingly mechanistic.[42]

We are stalked by the danger of being tempted to have all the answers and to distribute them in computerized fashion. Possibly both sender and receiver have a more authentic participation when they recognize the truth of Fromm's statement:

> If it is true that the ability to be puzzled is the beginning of wisdom, then this truth is a sad commentary on the wisdom of modern man. Even children are rarely surprised . . . . We are effective, but somewhat dull. We are proud of our "realism" and our cleverness in manipulating it.[43]

The chances for meaningful communication with the listener are lessened when the invitation to participate is forgotten and we succumb to the practice of fragmentizing our existence and dividing it all up into observable segments for final analysis and pronouncement, thereby missing the real reality. There is truth in the statement that the Gospel, too, can be made so mechanized and "specific" that it is in danger of disappearing.

Dumas sees a link between radio-television and modern art, which shows the unfinished invitation to the recipient to go on thinking where the artist left off.[44]

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[42]See Appendix I for a sample week's schedule of programming (approximately one hour per day) for Radio Voice of the Gospel, Antsirabe, Madagascar, January, 1966.

[43]Erick Fromm, The Forgotten Language (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1951), pp. 3-4.

[44]Andre Dumas, op. cit.

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Hartman distinguishes the invitation to participation presented by the Gospel from that of the advertisers, concluding that "that is why the Church must invite to conversation." (it.). The Gospel is precisely able to do this, Hartman continues, because "it takes the individual out of the mass and puts him into the situation of dialogue." It is necessary, through the media, claims Hartman finally, "to train the individual to independence."[45]

The opposite stance to the invitation to participate runs the dangerous risk or temptation of moving from persuasion to propaganda. This is a distortion, again, of person, of both the propagandist and the propagandized. To invite the listener to consider the witness to faith as presenting the valid option for his commitment that is in line with his genuinely held opinion about his needs is far from the propaganda stance of mechanized word that distorts and manipulates needs and attitudes in such a fashion that the personal will of the sender is realized, leaving the listener in a situation that might even be contrary to his genuinely felt attitudes previously. It is manipulation for a purpose, building attitude change on a falsely built premise, inviting to a false participation that denies personhood.

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[45]Olov Hartman, "The Mass Media--Man's Power and Subjection," The Christian Broadcaster, XII: 4 (December 1965), 10.

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Successful communication seeks to involve person in such a way that the sender "succeeds" in having the message accepted. We live in community and in dialogue. There is no objective dialogue that eliminates the influence of person towards sympathy to one's views. It would be absurd to equate propaganda with all levels of "success" in communication. The question for the radio-television communicator is to know when love and conerned witness end and where bigotry and propaganda begin. The media do have great potential for propaganda, as witnessed and researched concerning the great political propagandists in World War II, especially.

A warning comes from Boyd:

> Surely, at present we are not sufficiently keeping the Cross in focus and withstanding the powerful lure of the success symbols of our age and our society. Somehow, to violate the integrity of a person by exploiting him for Jesus Christ seems even more critical than exploiting him for a product, say Chrysler or Paramount. Love (it.) is always the antithesis and refutation of exploitation.[46]

Jacques Ellul, writing about propaganda, claims that it is, in a sense, necessary in our society even though it denies man. He shows how difficult it is to say exactly what propaganda consists of, speaks of several facets of it and presents what he states as the American authors' conception of it as given by the Institute for Propaganda Analysis inspired by Lasswell:

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[46]Malcolm Boyd, Crisis in Communication (Garden City: Doubleday, 1957), p. 37.

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> Propaganda is the expression of opinions or actions carried out deliberately by individuals or groups with a view to influencing the opinions or actions of other individuals or groups for predetermined ends and through psychological manipulations.[47]

The invitation to participate is the opposite pole from propaganda. It sincerely has the good of the listener in mind instead of seeking to manipulate for selfish ends.

The sender must permit the other to maintain integrity. The gesture toward the other, even the listening gesture, is the first act in communication. The author seriously questions the integrity of so-called climate creation and image-building for the above reasons. With the limitations of radio-television realistically faced, the communicator invites to participation and reflection while he witnesses to the total concerns of faith in relationship.

There is a bit of healthy tension in the communicator's responsibility to involve himself in invitation and persuasion that avoids the distortion of person as seen in propaganda.

Development of Channels of Dialogue Between Source and Receiver

To foster all of the foregoing processes, the sender must build up, as much as possible, dialogue with the receivers, either individually or through their opinion leaders.

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[47]Jacques Ellul, Propaganda (New York: Knopf, 1965) p. xiii.

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The best communication, says Dewire, must give the other an opportunity to give.[48] This is obviously difficult in radio-television, yet, not so different from so much of what is considered Christian communication today. Possibly, the relationships in radio-television can be so structured so as to offer more feedback and dialogue than the usual structures do.

The receiver must, at least, be offered the opportunity to relate to the source, to test his opinions as presented, to become aware of the openness of the source in this way. This type of dialogue is distinct in its structure from the interpersonal channels fed by the media. It is an attempt at concretizing the listening gesture of the source. It gives the receiver the opportunity to correct and relate.

The receiver is not an isolated self. Faith is not a phenomenon circumscribed by the self, even though it is personal in the wholesome sense described.

Feedback is also for the good of the sender in his relatedness to the receivers. His message is liable to become sterile or disembodied as he is unable to watch the reactions of his listeners, to perceive whether or not they are getting his message or to adjust his approach so as to be able to enter more realistically into the listener's situation. Radio-television has the ever-present danger of

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[48]Harry A. DeWire, The Christian as Communicator (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), p. 175.

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failing to communicate because of a type of downward or paternal one-way communication.

This is why responsible broadcasters give equal attention to the crucial matter of feedback, dialogue and follow-up in the concerns of audience relations. It is not the purpose of this study to go into the specifics of either programming or audience relations, but the radio-television communicator must be prepared seriously to enter into real dialogue with the audience. The use of other media is an aid to this.

The message itself must have invitation to concrete feedback, not in the form of gimmickry but in genuine openness and desire to relate. It is of greatest importance that opinion leaders be related to in this way and that their contributions to the interpersonal process be supplemented by other written materials and aids. Face-to-face contact with the source should also be provided for through a type of programming itself that gets out among the people for its material and allows the feeling and sense of a grass-roots expression to develop as over against the perennial sending down of the message from the high tower.

This is why it is so important to develop a system of special listening posts among the population as much as possible where key people gather in groups to listen and discuss. When programming, however, is unrelated to the totality of life, these groups become selective in the same

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way that a church group would. Groups have dialogue among themselves, but, what is of equal importance, they provide concrete opportunities for feedback and relatedness. The structure of the message must have the invitation to feedback as an integral part. It must not be artificially inserted as just a call to support, a call to get a memento (even though these may have their place in the proper context), or just a status builder.

Channels of dialogue must be fostered between the source and receiver as well as among the receivers themselves; for, in the final analysis, as in any communication, so also in the concerns of faith there needs to be, in the words of E. H. Robertson, "an assimilation of the information--the kerygma (it.)--an opportunity to discuss its truth and relevance, together with a decision-making community--the Church."[49] The UNESCO media experiments in India, particularly, have proven the validity of this regarding the decision process fostered in groups.

To summarize, this chapter, in attempting a prognosis for the Church's use of radio-television in the concerns of faith, defines the theological approach to the media not as an automated certain communication, but does find congruence between its concerns for faith and a realistic media

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[49]E. H. Robertson, "Potentialities of Radio and Television in Modern Communication," The Christian Broadcaster, XIV; 2 (August 1967), 17-29.

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communication effort based on general concerns of person in communication and person in the relationship of faith.

The Christian communicator enters the media in natural uncontrived fashion as part of the contemporary complex structure in which the Church finds its life. Radio-television has a potential for communicating these concerns of faith through a general approach that relates faith to the whole man in reality, in the totality of the faith dimension, through finding congruence between the complexities of the media and the interpersonal aspect of the development of faith, in using authentic relevant word proper to the media and in relating to the listener by avoiding the separation of word from the relatedness to self, just as God's word is always addressed to the self. This authentic approach is defined in the context of relatedness to the listener in the terms of need arousal and recognition--helping to raise the right questions latent in the basic needs of person that open the way to fulfilment in the widest dimension.

This fulfilment finds focus in the Gospel as the oral good news of highest import that is presented not as demand but in the context of relevancy to the needs and in the genuine invitation to participate, to reflect, to see the option of the faith encounter as answer and fulfilment. This involves being led beyond the offense of the offer of the Gospel to decision for liberation from the greater offense of fragmentation, limitation, insecurity and sin.

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The dialogue between source and receiver is fostered to give the greatest potential to the realization of the above goals which would otherwise suffer from other limitations in the media.

III. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

Our concerns have centered around the integrity of person, the integrity of the message concerning faith, and the integrity of the radio-television media. To distort any of these is to distort communication.

Faith, in this matter, is related to faithfulness.

The problem that gave rise to this study was that of the bewilderment of the Church as it approached the dimensions of communication as seen in radio-television and the questions raised concerning integrity as here defined, namely, faithfulness to message, media and person.

The solution was defined as discovery of the implications of faith primarily as encounter, as fellowship, as a dynamic in relatedness that, when entered upon, means fulfilment of person in its wholeness and release for life in relationship and real community, freedom to live in true humanity. This finds its determinative dimension in the faith relationship which opens up person to its resources in God, given substance and newness through the Gospel of forgiveness and grace and flowing out in interpersonal and creative patterns.

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The author's definition of the theological concerns as related to the structural concerns of the media come out of serious involvement for some years in radio broadcasting and his understanding of the concerns of fellow churchmen and broadcasters around the world.

Neither faith nor the approach to the message through the media should be a denial of person or a call to a wrong detachment from "world". When the latter approach is brought to the entire structure of radio-television, the potential for the reality of faith is distorted and dimmed. This is a result of a common error in considering existential concerns as unrelated and unsympathetic to the character of the faith encounter. Our sloganizing and labeling of approaches are sometimes able to blind us to reality and creativity within the dynamic of the faith relationship, confusing the issues in the quest for true humanity under God.

There are limitations to the media. This chapter, in its detailed presentation and summary, attempts to apply our definition of integrity in such a way as to give the greatest potential for communicating the deeper concerns of faith through radio-television. It is ultimately always done, in effect, through person.

There are the twin dangers of undue pessimism and exaggerated optimism. There are indications of new types of potential growing out of the character of the media and the changing effect on man. There are yet many unknowns. The

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precise measurement of effects is a problematic undertaking.

However, understanding what we do know about the media and about the power of the Gospel, the Church should not now be hesitant for the wrong reasons. The radio-television communicator will approach his task with optimism tempered by a good amount of humility.

Franklin Clark Fry, when president of the Lutheran World Federation, at the opening ceremony of Radio Voice of the Gospel in Addis Ababa on Feb. 26, 1963, set a good course:

> The kind of Gospel that will be sent over the air waves from this place . . . will never be designed to be anything narrow. It will always be wide, equal to the interests of the Lord of the universe Himself, and of the One who lived fully in this world that nothing human will ever be alien to Him. Whatever is of benefit to human beings, to their standard of life, their health, to their advancement, to add to their education, to enrich their personalities, as well as to open their ears to the best news of all, of peace with God, will legitimately be within the scope of the concern of the programs that will be beamed from here. All that is debarred is everything that is intended to exploit or agitate or tear down.[50]

Students of person, of communication and of theology have all warned about the problem of over-individualization of contemporary man. There are distortions in measuring the media only by the yardstick of pure individualism. The mass media should be able to speak authentically also to what Teilhard de Chardin speaks of as the "fundamental oneness of

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[50]Franklin Clark Fry, "The Voice of the Gospel," (Addis Ababa: Radio Voice of the Gospel), (Mimeographed.)

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the family of man" as a "fact of the greatest importance."[51]

Essential relatedness to the family of man that builds successful communication and authentic faith in relationship does not disguise faith's primary concerns as proclaimed in the Gospel which, ultimately, is of the greatest relevance to man.

Compassion and humility must be part of the fabric of radio-television communication in such a way that the concerns of the faith encounter and fellowship are oriented in the conviction that "that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." (I Jn. 1:3-4)

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[51]Bernard Towers, Teilhard de Chardin (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1966), p. 39.

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APPENDIX

CONTENTS--SAMPLE WEEKLY RADIO PROGRAMS
RADIO VOICE OF THE GOSPEL
Antsirabe, Madagascar

MONDAY:
- Amazing World! (Educational)
- Chats About Farming (Dialogue, expert and farmer)
- Sings My Heart! (Some type of solo performance)
- Let's Worship Together (5 minute varying format)

TUESDAY:
- Do You Know? (About the things around us)
- Played For You! (Varied instrumental)
- Around the World (Selected relevant happenings)
- The Beginning of Wisdom (Teaching of Scripture--study scripts sent out to listeners)

WEDNESDAY:
- Calling All Children! (Variety with children, much remote recording, dramatic, etc.)
- Dadanaivo and Family (Family situation, local life)
- Food For the Soul

THURSDAY:
- Voice of Youth (Discussion of relevant concerns in varying areas)
- Songs of Other People (Overseas, folk, etc.)
- Famous Personalities
- Golden Words

FRIDAY:
- Songs of the Soul (Group singing various areas)
- School of Music (With listeners writing in)
- Parables in Sound

SATURDAY:
- Visiting Around (Remote documentation)
- Musical Interlude
- Man and His Life (Locally written dramatized segments illustrating particular problems of existence)

SUNDAY:
- Living Drama
- We Preach Christ (Free format with 8-10 minute devotional)

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